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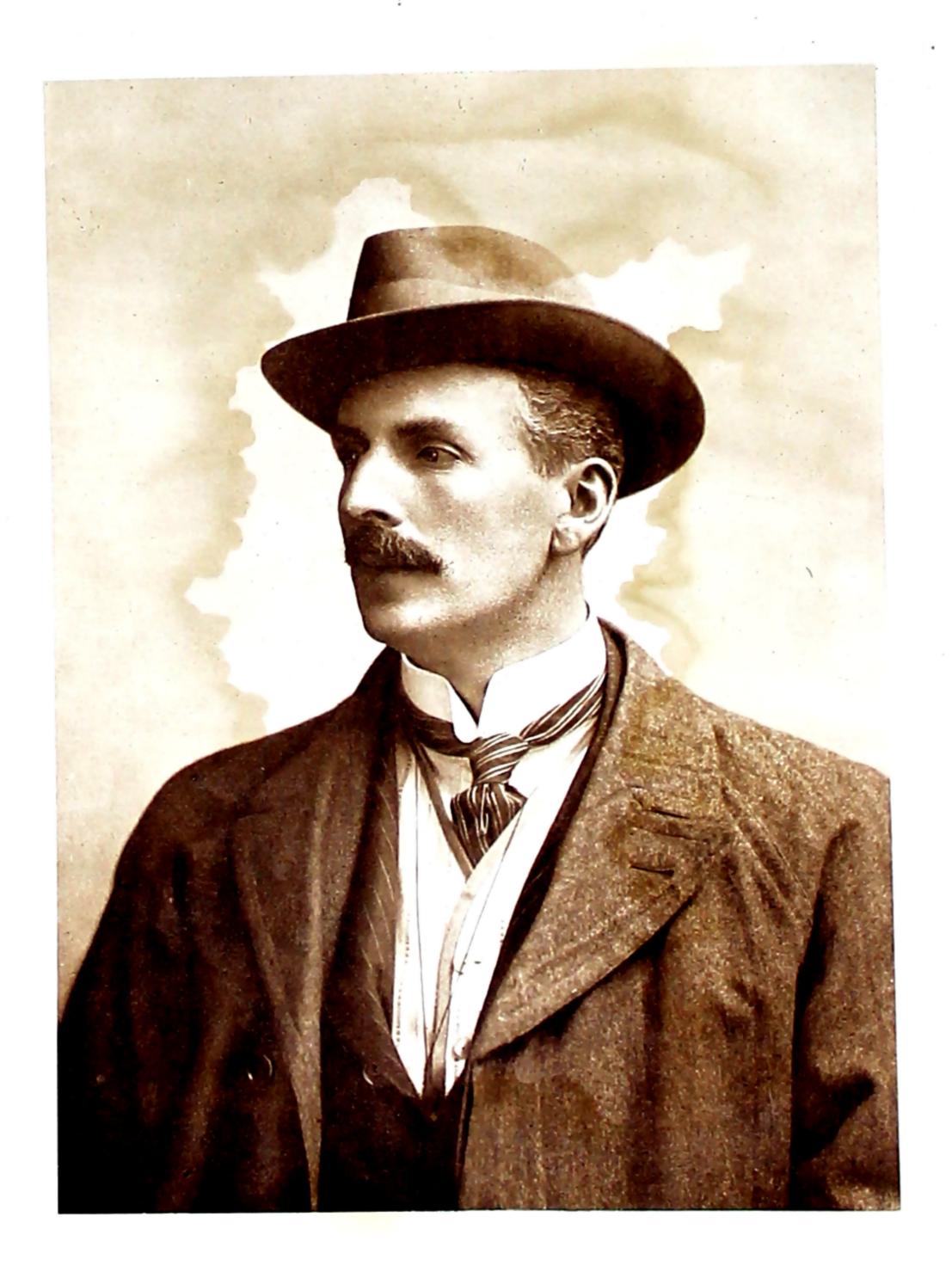
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BIG GAME HUNTING IN CENTRAL AFRICA AFRICA

JAMES DUNBAR-BRUNTON M.D.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS AND A PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECE

LONDON: ANDREW MELROSE
3, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C
1912

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PREFACE

A LL healthy men, and a large number of women, in this country at least, have a natural instinct for sport. It is a small tragedy when the instinct becomes a keen desire which health or circumstances prevent the realization of. Compensation for these unlucky ones is occasionally got by reading books which describe exploits of people more fortunate than themselves. They feel by proxy the thrill that comes to the sportsman over a successful shot, or an escape from a situation of peril.

The present book is not the record of what one may call a professional hunter, but the simple recollections of hunting experiences in the recreations of a medical man, whose good fortune it had been to live in a land which may be described as A Big Game Paradise.

The most exciting form of sport is surely that in which a man pits his energy and skill against a wild animal, where everything depends on the possession of a quick active brain, cool nerve, and a steady hand. Even with these and the possession of a repeating Express rifle there is often imminent danger, and it is this constant danger that makes the hunting of big game the most fascinating of

PREFACE

sports. My book, then, which I hope will be read as a practical one by other sportsmen, will probably chiefly appeal to those readers who get their sporting instincts gratified by reading of the adventures of others. It will also, I hope, be of service to those who meditate big game shooting and are uncertain what country offers the best opportunities.

I should explain that I had no idea of recording my experiences as big game hunter in any literary form, much less in a book. Those who go on sporting expeditions with a view to writing books, should not fail to take a camera with them, for an album full of photographs of animals in their wild state is only second in interest to walls covered with heads, horns and skins. If I had had a camera with me, I could often have taken advantage of golden opportunities for exciting pictures which would have enriched this volume. As it is, I have been indebted to friends for a great many of the illustrations in this book, and I offer my best thanks to Messrs. Leyer, Osborne, Owen, Young, and Melland for a number of photographs which they have kindly supplied, and to the Hon. Miss S. Hicks Beach for two films of carnivorae which she shot in Africa; also to the British South Africa Company, who have kindly supplied not only some splendid photographs, but also maps of the country in which my shooting was done.

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Chapter I

THE OUTFIT

CERTAIN amount of preparation is necessary when any one starts upon a journey, and the consideration of the outfit is a very important part of the preparation. When the journey means a visit to a part of the African continent where mechanical or horse-transport is unknown, and where every bale of goods and box of provisions must be brought within the limit of weight for human transport, the necessity for restricting the outfit is even more obvious. I would suggest that when a shooting trip has been decided upon for the territory of North-East Rhodesia, a general comprehensive list should be made of clothes, stores, guns, cartridges, and anything else which may suggest itself to the intending sportsman. This list cannot be made in an hour or even a day.

The sportsman is sure to ask friends who have made similar trips to various parts of the world for advice as to what to take, and my advice is that all these suggestions should be entered into a note-book, and re-arranged under the separate

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headings under which they naturally fall. At the end of perhaps a week, the sportsman will find that he has a list of necessities which would fill probably one or two luggage vans. At this stage I recommend a blue pencil. With this he will score out item after item till his outfit begins to assume the dimensions which would fill two or three carts.

With the hope, then, that the experience of a man who has travelled through the country for several years on end will be of benefit to other sportsmen, I am writing down what I found to be the limit for necessity and comfort.

When it is remembered that every article taken into the country must be carried on the heads or shoulders of natives, and that a large caravan requires a lot of feeding, which is not always easy, the desirability of only taking out the necessary articles is very obvious.

First and foremost comes the tent.

Tent.—Edgington's tents are the best, and a large one should be bought. The comfort of having a large tent can only be appreciated by a man who has had to travel with a small one, for the tent in this country is not only the bedroom, but the dwelling-house as well. If it is too small, the bed and mosquito net crowd the floor space, leaving but little room for other baggage, tables or chairs.

THE OUTFIT

If it be thought better to have two tents, one can be used as a bedroom and the other as a dwelling-room, and I think the sportsman will find more comfort in having two moderate-sized tents than the one large one. Attached to one of these should be a canvas bathroom, which goes on the rear of the tent, so that the splashing of the tent with water is avoided.

A ground sheet of thick canvas known as the Green Willesden Water-proof, 12 feet by 9 feet, is necessary for each tent. The furniture of the tent should consist of the following articles:—

One X bed with horse-hair mattress and mosquito net with rods; these rods can be done away with in the country and replaced by saplings cut from the bush, at each camping-place. These saplings are sharpened at the ends and bent over the bed with the ends in the ground. Very early in my travels I had to adopt this plan as my rods got broken by the rough usage of my boys.

During the shooting season the nights are exceedingly cold, and not less than three blankets should be taken for the bed. Sheets I do not consider desirable. They soon soil, and if not properly dried are a source of danger. I used a native mat to put over the bed, and the blankets on top of this. I consider this one of the most comfortable ways of sleeping in a tent. Two pillows with cases

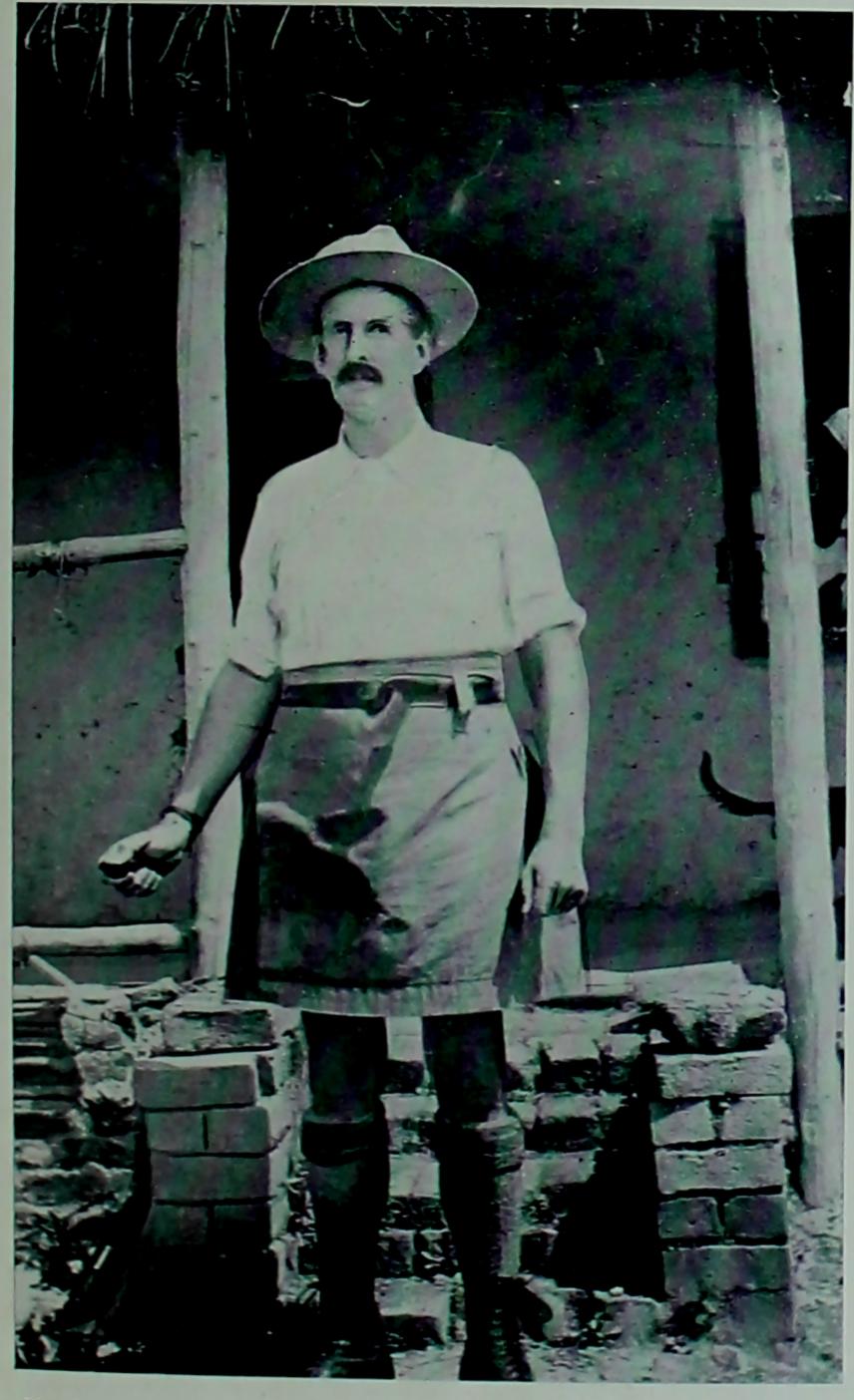
for the bed, and two extra cushions for ordinary use, are also required.

A roorkee chair is not only very convenient for transport, as it takes to pieces when not in use, and is easily put up when required, but is exceedingly comfortable for tent use.

At least two X tables are necessary, one large for dining, and one small. As a roorkee chair is rather too low to draw up to the table for meals, an X chair is necessary. I found that folding stools will answer the same purpose as this X chair, and are more useful. They are stronger, and are always ready for use. While on the subject of chairs, I may say that the chair which gave me most comfort throughout my travels was the ordinary deck chair with a long, detachable foot rest, and a small pillow for the head.

In the tent two Securem straps to fasten to the tent poles, one for the guns and one for hanging the clothes on, will not be found amiss.

For lighting purposes at night, candles with wind shades, two in number, with a lamp of some make which will stand plenty of wind without being extinguished will be found sufficient. Possibly the best is the Lord's lamp. This is packed in a tin case with a can for oil, and if the oil runs out, can be used for a candle. As a rule there is no diffi-



Photo]

The Author in travelling kit.

[David Ross.



THE OUTFIT

culty in getting paraffin oil in this country, as it is stocked at all the big stores.

The Bath.—This is a very important part of the outfit, and probably plays as much part in the daily life of the sportsman in Africa, and is as essential, as his food.

Many travellers like a large zinc bath. This requires two porters to carry, but can be used during the journey to put such things as lamps, plates or china in. Personally, I think the folding canvas bath is as good as any for tent use. A substitute for this can be made by digging a hole in the ground, and stretching over it a waterproof ground sheet. The water can then be poured in.

CLOTHES.—The clothes to be taken by the sportsman, their quantity and kind, must depend on the individual. An over-stock of these is not only in the way, but possibly a temptation to native servants to steal articles which are never asked for or used by their owner.

As the trip is one of active travelling and shooting, the costume which would be most used will be the ordinary one of khaki cloth made up to taste.

The best model is a dark-coloured khaki shirt, shorts much like boating shorts, and a jacket of the same material with plenty of pockets.

With this costume I used puttees, which I found exceedingly comfortable, though many sportsmen

like leggings. Four shirts and two pairs of shorts will be found enough for the trip. Boots should be bought with great care, and it is not necessary that they should be very heavy, provided they are made of good material. I found the boots known as "colonials," made for me by Lawn & Alger, London, stand an astonishing amount of hard wear, even in a rocky country, without their constitution suffering much. Several pairs of boots of various kinds are a comfort to have, and besides these a few pairs of rubber or rope soled shoes are essential to ensure a quiet tread when spooring animals.

To avoid blisters or corns woollen socks are the best, and several dozen pairs are needed. No pair should be worn twice without being washed. Jaeger belts I advise to be worn both day and night. They prevent the catching of chills in a country were sweating is free.

No one should forget to bring a thick travelling coat and rug, for, during the cold season, the drop between the mid-day temperature in the sun and that during the night is very great. It seems strange to talk of a heavy ulster and a rug being necessary beside a huge camp fire in Central Africa a few degrees south of the Equator, but they are indispensable at night. With regard to headgear, the helmet gives the best shade for the eyes and

THE OUTFIT

protection for the head for ordinary travelling, but I do not care much for it for shooting. A wide-brimmed hat of double thickness of felt, lined with red or orange cloth, is the most serviceable hat for bush work. This ought to be dark grey or khaki in colour.

The Lunch Basket.—For the inner man I found the lunch basket and tea basket made for me by Scott simply indispensable. I was able when travelling to carry not only a day's supply of cooked provisions in these baskets, but all the plates, knives, spoons, and forks, and even tablecloths and napkins necessary for a meal.

All that is required with such baskets is a table boy, who, when camp is reached, will unpack, and produce the meal ready; and upon long treks, as I have done after elephants or other game, these baskets have made me quite independent of camp, besides giving me the comfort it gives every hunter to know that his food is within easy reach, when he is hungry. In buying these baskets it is no use having china plates, etc., for these soon get smashed. Enamel or aluminium ware is the best.

KITCHEN UTENSILS.—For kitchen use when in camp I had a very serviceable outfit of assorted aluminium pots and pans, and a gridiron. The pots and pans fitted one within the other. Two galvanized iron buckets are necessary adjuncts. Many

travellers use such buckets to boil the water for the bath. I myself found a large kettle serve this purpose well enough. A small kettle is useful to obtain a quick supply of hot water.

Two enamelled basins, one to wash the face in and the other for washing up the dishes, are necessary. When travelling the toilet articles are packed inside one of these basins, and the other forms a cover.

To carry the clothes, air-tight tin boxes are essential, and the number of these required depends, of course, upon the quantity of clothes taken into the country. Usually one of the ground sheets serves to wrap the bedding in when on a journey.

The list I have given here may be called the essential minimum of what the sportsman requires; of course it can be supplemented according to individual tastes.

Chapter II

RIFLES AND GUNS

THE question of which is the best rifle for big game would probably bring a different answer from each sportsman who has shot much. The answer would be most likely the particular make and kind of rifle he has killed most game with, and has most confidence in using.

For the tyro coming out to the country, the most serviceable rifles are the ordinary ·303 and the ·450 which is used for the larger or dangerous game, such as elephants, rhinos, lions, buffalo, and so on.

Many men like to use a heavy rifle at larger buck, such as eland, roan or hartebeeste, because it gives such a knock-out shot. The African buck often show great vitality when wounded by a rifle of small calibre. The Mauser rifles, either the 7.9 or the 8.9, have great hitting power, and are superior in that respect to the .303. The advantage, however, of the .303 is that one can always obtain cartridges in the country. These smaller

rifles are very useful for long shots. When such long shots have to be taken, I am of opinion that the bullet should be solid; for not only is there more accuracy at a long distance with the solid bullet, but a shot through the heart is just as effective with such a bullet as it would be with a soft-nosed or split bullet. Again, a wound from a solid bullet in another part of the body is much more merciful, as the buck may recover, in case of it escaping to the bush. A buck getting away on three legs, when one has been smashed by a soft-nosed bullet, will inevitably die a miserable death from gangrene if not pulled down by some of the carnivorae. On the other hand, if hit in the leg or hip by a solid bullet, the hole made is clean, and there is but little destruction of the tissues.

I know the Manlicher rifle of .256 is very popular in East Africa, but I have not seen it used in North-East Rhodesia. Other rifles made in various calibres by those well-known makers, Westley Richards, Jeffrey, and Rigby, I have seen used by other men, and they have proved very effective at all species of game, but personally I have had no experience of them.

I can testify, however, to the high excellence of the .500 1910 Winchester magazine rifle, which is exceedingly accurate with a very low trajectory; moreover, the rapid method of loading from the

RIFLES AND GUNS

magazine certainly saved my life from an elephant on at least one occasion.

As to the cartridges; for the ordinary four months' trip about 2,000 should be enough for each rifle. Of this total, four-fifths ought to be split or soft-nosed for the smaller rifles; the remainder, solid.

For the larger rifles of, say, .400 upwards, two-thirds of the number ought to be solid; the remainder, soft-nosed or split.

The quantities of cartridges taken may be much in excess of what is necessary, and it is quite likely that not a third of them will be used, but it must be remembered that there is no possibility of supplying any deficiency of cartridges in this country, except perhaps the ·303. It is much better to have a large margin of surplus stock, and there is hardly any difficulty in getting rid of these cartridges and rifles in the country at the expiration of the trip.

The total amount of cartridges need not be carried necessarily on the trip; it can be divided up and left at some administrative station from where supplies can be had when required.

Two shot guns must be taken, one of good work-manship for personal use of the hunter, and another of lighter make, with hammers—the common or what is known as "Keeper's gun"—to give to the night watchman beside the camp fire.

There are many native hunters in the territory who are quite good at shooting birds, and the sportsman can supplement his larder by employing one of these men to shoot the numerous duck, geese and partridge which abound there. While on this subject of the native hunter, I should like to impress upon the sportsman not to employ any native gun-bearer to carry a rifle unless such a man has been personally certified as thoroughly reliable by the Native Commissioner of the district he is engaged in. The necessity frequently arises where the spare rifle carried by a gun-bearer must be within reach; if the gun-bearer is not a brave man, he is very likely to bolt with the spare rifle in the presence of urgent danger.

However good one of these men may be at tracking a wounded animal or following the spoor, he is of no value if he bolts at instant danger, with or without the rifle. I have not found good spoorers to be very plentiful. Some natives are marvellously clever at following spoor, and picking it up again when lost, but with these men it is instinct. Some are specialists at elephant hunting, others for buffalo or eland. None are very fond of following lion spoor. These spoorers can be engaged at the various stations in the territory, but some of the best spoorers I have had, have been raw natives picked up by chance in the course of shooting trips.

RIFLES AND GUNS

These villagers living in the bush do not suffer from that common disease of "swollen head," which afflicts so many of the natives who hang about the Administrative Stations.

To return to the shot guns, the cartridges taken for such should be of the sizes of shot 4, B.B., S.G.; about 400 in number of size 4, and a hundred of each of the latter. For protection from charging lions or leopards, or for night use on these animals, there is no better weapon than a shot gun, loaded with S.G.

To the armoury should be added a serviceable revolver, such as the Colt or the Webley ·450. The revolver shooting a heavy bullet is likely to be of more value than one of lighter calibre.

Two or three hunting knives are invaluable for skinning and cutting up the meat, and for the preparation of trophies.

Chapter III

HEALTH HINTS

THE climate of the country, especially on the Plateau, is excellent, and will be found more equable and agreeable than most of the vaunted health resorts of the Riviera. For one thing sudden changes are not known.

There are two seasons in the year: that of the rains which generally start in the month of November and finish in April; this is the season of the summer and of rapid growth; the other beginning early in April when the North-East Trade winds commence to blow, each day starting at 7 a.m., and finishing at 5 p.m. The weather becomes colder and bracing, and on the Plateau thick blankets are essential.

Under the influence of the cold wind and warm sun the luxuriant grasses begin to dry, and by the month of August, or earlier, are ready for the bush fires, which then sweep over the country. When all this grass is burnt it becomes possible to see and follow game; thus the shooting season starts in August and finishes about November.

HEALTH HINTS

I never found the heat of the sun too great to walk in or shoot in, and personally I used to wear a single thickness felt hat with a wide brim. This was lined with red silk and had a red handkerchief round the crown on the outside.

Whether the sportsman adopts a helmet or some form of Terai hat, these should be always lined with red or orange cloth, for the prevention of headaches or possibly sunstroke.

The drawback to health in this country comes neither from the climate, nor from noxious animals or snakes, but from the blood-sucking fly and the biting insect. These spoil what would otherwise be a perfect country for Europeans to live in, but even their attentions can be minimized, and the bad effects caused by the bites neutralized by precautions.

The worst of the insects is the beastly mosquito, which if no net is used to sleep under will quite prevent sleep.

Of the various species met with, far away the worst is the deadly fever-carrying Anopheles, which in the past ante-quinine days has been the cause of a long, sad list of deaths, and of permanent ill-health in numerous individuals from malaria. Since the use of mosquito nets and the daily taking of quinine, malarial attacks, black-water fever and deaths have almost become things of the past in this territory. There are few of the African

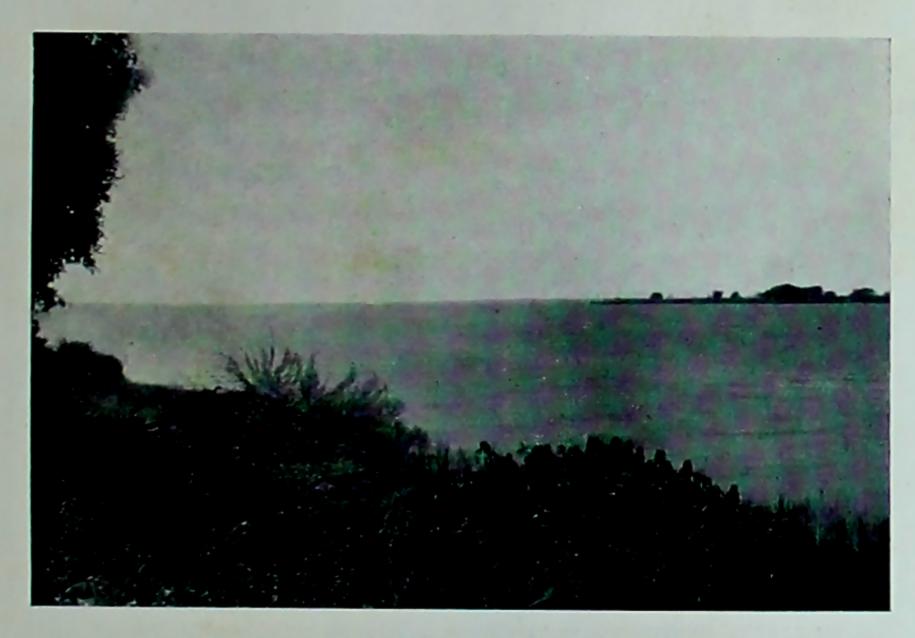
colonies where the European shows or enjoys better health than in North-East Rhodesia.

The quantity of quinine which must be taken weekly to ensure freedom from fever, even when badly bitten by mosquitoes, should not be less than 45 grains per week, of either the sulphate or hydrochloride. This means one tabloid of 5 grains at sundown each night, with one extra on Wednesday and Sunday. As this quinine is very liable to upset the stomach I recommend that it should be taken in the course of dinner rather than on an empty stomach.

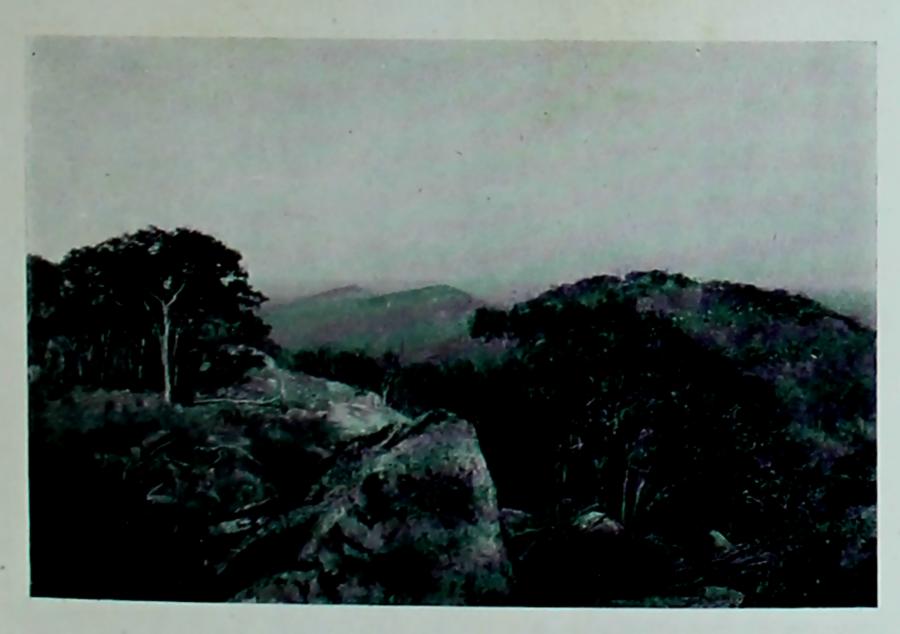
The trouble of sleeping sickness, though grave enough in itself, does not spread through the territory, and will not be seen by the sportsman. The cases have been few amongst natives, and the districts where they occur have been isolated from contact.

The Palpilas Fly, which carries the disease, is never met with on high altitudes such as forms the interior of the country, which is the part a sportsman will visit. Its near relative, the common Tsetse Fly, is most widespread, and is often exceedingly troublesome to travellers. I have noticed that it is very fond of biting the back of the neck and behind the ears when a helmet is worn; while those wearing wide-brimmed hats suffer much less.

Oil of eucalyptus and oil of citronella have the



Lake Bangweolo.



Mountain Scenery on the Plateau.

CANTILLE CULTURE MANNERS A Carrier of Carrier o

HEALTH HINTS

power of keeping them off if rubbed on the skin or clothes.

Fleas are common in the native villages, but will not be met with if the camp is pitched in the bush, nor will that loathsome insect the tick (Moubata)—the native name being Nkufu—be met with.

These carry the spirrilum of tick, or relapsing fever, and they infest the huts of the native villages by the thousand, hiding during the day, and coming out at night to suck blood. Practically all the natives are immune to the fever, but they will sometimes get a fresh attack if bitten by ticks when visiting another district.

In the west of the country and in a few other parts, the Gigger Flea has increased enormously in recent years, being spread from the coast by natives, and following the larger trade routes. In some places, where not so long ago it was not known, it is necessary to examine the feet every day to see that they are not attacked. It is not usually noticed in the feet or clothes till the part is red and swollen and itching. This irritation the gigger produces when the egg bag is ready to burst. At this stage the natives are very clever at digging out the flea with a knife or needle without bursting it. The subsequent hole heals up without trouble on being dressed with carbolic. This carbolic acid,

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well diluted, makes the best dressing also for the veldt sores which come on the hands and arms. The cause of these seems to be a micrococcus introduced by a prick or scratch from grass. They are very troublesome things, starting as a small pustule and increasing to an open ulcer, which goes on suppurating for weeks, and takes a long time to heal, generally leaving permanent marks, which may be pigmented.

For bites or wounds from animals I found nothing better than a strong solution of permanganate of potash, which has marvellous effect in destroying any poison left by tooth or claw in the wound.

A large majority of the natives suffer more or less from the Itch. It is quite possible that the sportsman may catch it from one of his boys, the transference being made from the hands of the boy on to the clothes the sportsman wears. To avoid this troublesome disease the personal boys should have their hands examined by their employer periodically. The disease can be recognized by the irritation, especially at night. It differs somewhat from the form found in Europe in infecting the skin of the whole body, starting as small raised points or papules on the skin, which become very irritable when the skin is hot, as in taking exercise, or, as I have said, at night under the heat of the bed clothes. These papules tend to break into sores

HEALTH HINTS

from scratching. Sulphur ointment soon makes a cure, but is of no use unless applied to the open sore; so these papules should be gently rubbed with a rough cloth to remove the outer skin before the ointment is applied.

The drugs required may be bought in an outfit box as supplied by any of the large wholesale chemists, but I should suggest one having a double compartment, containing the following drugs :—

500 5-grain tabloids, quinine sulphate or hydro-chloride.

- 1 bottle Eno's Fruit Salt.
- 2 small bottles chlorodyne.
- 1 bottle "Dovers' Powder" in 200 5-grain tabloids.
- 1 small bottle of 2-grain tabloids calomel.
- 200 colocynth and hyoscyamus pills, or vegetable laxative.
- 1 lb. Epsom Salts.
- 1 lb. each of carbolic, zinc, and sulphur ointment in jars.
- ¹/₂ ounce permanganate of potash.
- 1 double lancet.
- 1 pair of scissors.
- 4 packets compressed boric gauze, and the same of mercuric.
- 1 roll Mead's plaster.
- 1 ounce pure carbolic acid.

It is not necessary to carry bandages, as they can be made when required from calico. A few bottles of ammonia for use in the bath, or for mosquito bites, are a great comfort to have. A box containing a few cakes of carbolic soap, 1-20, with some cakes of tar soap, is well worth the taking.

The water in the country is not only plentiful but very pure, and there is no risk from organic impurities in it. Occasionally in the dry season it may be necessary to camp beside a marsh, in which case the water may contain vegetable detritus. Drinking this water produces diarrhæa. The water can be filtered through calico, but it is more satisfactory to take a Berkefeld Filter with at least six spare candles.

I may end this chapter by condensing into a few sentences some advice to travellers.

- (1) Never forget daily doses of quinine.
- (2) Keep the head cool by day and the body warm by night.
- (3) The use of alcohol is not a necessity in this climate.
- (4) Never drink alcohol before sun-down, and then moderately.
- (5) Live freely on fruit and vegetables whenever possible.

When on the march residents in this country find it better not to drink much water during the heat of the day, as this tends to produce copious perspiration, and rapid tiring of the body. It is quite possible with a little restraint to acquire the habit of doing without water while tracking. Keeping a twig of a tree in the mouth will relieve great thirst. As these marches are not continuous but

HEALTH HINTS

are broken by occasional rests—these rests being for the purpose of not fatiguing the native carriers too much—and as the halting places are generally beside streams, the traveller can drink a small quantity of cool water sparingly while sitting under the shade of a tree.

On the Plateau streams are most frequent, and are practically found every few miles running in all directions down the mountain side, or bubbling up from some springs in the midst of the thick dark wood known by the natives as "Msito."

Chapter IV

SOME APHORISMS FOR A SPORTSMAN

A LWAYS carry your own rifle when on the spoor. Many a chance of getting a good shot at buck is lost by not doing so. Be ready also for the unexpected in Central Africa. It is a Zoo without cages.

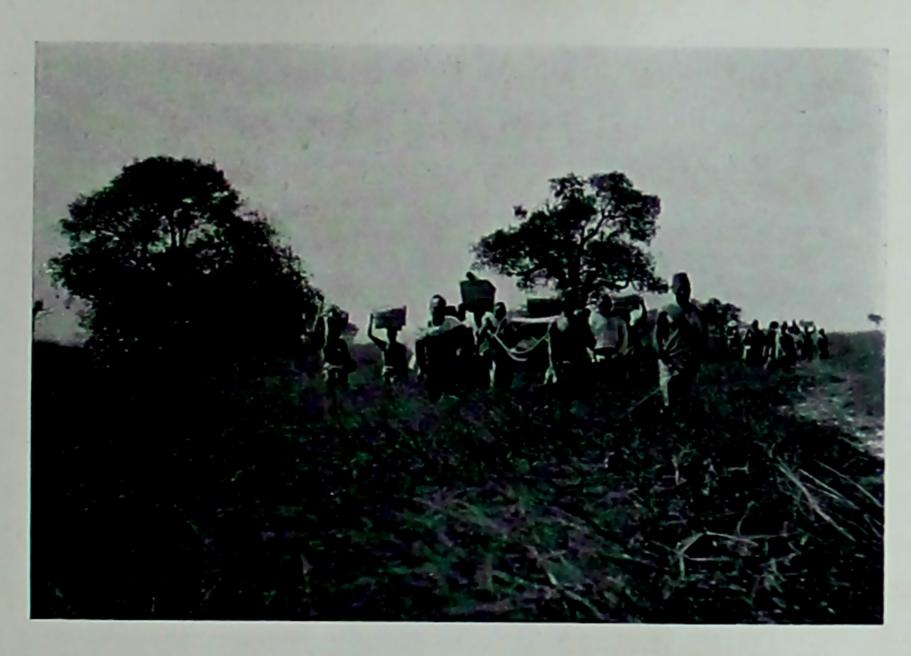
After firing at a buck the sight of a blood trail may flatter the sportsman's heart that he has not missed, but this blood does not mean that the wounded animal will be afterwards seen or found.

Aim to kill. It is a sad thing to wound only.

Do not blame your game finders if the buck you are stalking rushes off without giving you a chance of a shot. It probably heard the noise of your own boots. All living things walk without sound in the African wilds. Only the white man likes to hear his foot-falls.

Do not let your natives run more risk than yourself in following up wounded or dangerous animals. They may be more active but you carry the rifle.

Always see to the loading of your own rifles. The black man is imitative, but not always intelli-



Caravan on the March.



Photoj

Native Village on Lake Bangweolo. [R. A. Osborne.

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SOME APHORISMS FOR A SPORTSMAN

gent. The jamming of a rifle may be followed by painful, if not fatal, results to yourself or to some of your men. Therefore avoid all chance of this.

Natives should not be knocked about if they do not always understand or do what you want. They have not got their employer's intelligence, and cannot strike back. Be courteous to the native chiefs; the Central African native is innately polite, and has a keen sense both of justice and retribution.

Many a sportsman has gone empty away from a district where game is plentiful owing to his disregard of courtesy. A white man with the reputation of being "fierce" with the native carriers will frequently be told on visiting a district that there is no game, and if he insists on going out for game, will probably see none.

Therefore courtesy, and a few simple presents in the shape of handfuls of beads, or a few yards of cloth, or a knife, go a long way to ensure success.

Chapter V

CAMP LIFE IN THE BUSH

A T the end of his first day's march, after leaving the railway, either at Broken Hill or at Ndola in the West to where the railway now extends, the sportsman will have his tent pitched, and each night during the period he remains in North-East Rhodesia his tent will be his home. It is not, however, the nightly pitchings of his tent that I am going to describe in this chapter, but rather the much more interesting details of what might be called "camp life" when he reaches the localities in which he decides from time to time to shoot.

No one who has not had the experience of it can imagine the delightful charm of camp life in this beautiful country. Covered as it is with trees, while numerous streams run through it in all directions, it is never hard to choose some lovely glade in which to pitch one's tent. There is a great deal in being able to travel where one wishes through a country and to settle one's moving home where the prospect pleases with no one to say one

CAMP LIFE IN THE BUSH

nay. There are no fences and therefore no boundaries, and no restrictions as to cutting down or burning as much timber as one wishes for camp fires and other purposes. It is a simple and primitive life the sportsman leads under these conditions, a life so absolutely healthy that it brings out the best in the man, physically and mentally. In this country, having an elevation of 5,000 to 6,000 feet, there is no debilitating heat to contend with, the cool breezes blowing by day and the temperature falling so much at night during the winter season as to necessitate a liberal supply of blankets. When the dawn breaks, ushered in by the twittering of birds, and by the curious musical call of the Mugomba buzzard calling to his mate in a deep voice, while she replies an octave higher, the sportsman wakes fresh and keen for the work of the day, which is itself a pleasure and a keen excitement.

Then, after the morning cup of tea, coffee or chocolate, off he starts upon his serious work of hunting for buck or other game. If the game in prospect should be the lordly elephant or the cumbersome but dangerous rhino, our sportsman should look well to the condition of his guns before he starts and make sure that all is in complete order; and when he reaches the trail of one of these larger animals he must be a man of no imagination if he

does not have a thrill of anticipation accompanied by a certain feeling, if not perhaps of timidity, of natural anxiety as to the ultimate successful result of his chase. So often things go all right; but there is ever the fear of the unexpected happening, and when the unexpected does happen, it may be most serious.

In deciding where to camp, the first essential is naturally to fix upon the best locality which contains game, or the special game which the hunter desires to shoot. Having reached this locality it devolves upon the sportsman to choose a camping ground. This site must have sufficient level ground to allow him to pitch his tent properly. I do not know myself which is the most unpleasant: to have a bed at such an angle that one slips out of it feet first during the night when the muscles relax in sleep, or that one is wakened up by finding one's pillows on the tent floor and one's head hanging over the end of the X bed. To avoid this, the sportsman should choose his own site, for natives have not got very good ideas as to what is level ground. The surroundings should be open, to avoid the danger of unobserved approach of lions or leopards, as would happen if the bush were too thick in the immediate proximity of the tent.

The part on which the tent is to be pitched is then cleared of all stones, grass and roots. As the sports-

CAMP LIFE IN THE BUSH

man has a large company of native carriers, their safety and comfort must be considered as well. They are usually able to look after themselves and build little shelters under which they can lie, but I should strongly advise the sportsman to insist on the building of a large circular fence round his encampment, as the natives are very careless at night about keeping watch, falling asleep while on guard. It is a very unpleasant thing to be awakened suddenly in the middle of the night by the frenzied outcry of excited natives who invade the tent in their panic caused by the attack of a lion or lions who may have succeeded in taking away one of their sleeping companions. As lions are exceedingly plentiful in all parts of the country, and man-eaters are numerous, such an occurrence may easily happen unless guarded against.

If a second tent is not carried by the sportsman to serve as a dining-room, a delightful shelter can be made out of fresh branches, under which he can pass the hot hours of the day in green coolness. Needless to say, before pitching the tent at all, it is necessary when possible to choose a spot near good water. Sometimes, however, it happens that after chasing elephants with a successful result one is obliged to pitch his tent close to the carcase of the elephant, which may mean having to send many miles for water. This happened once to me. The

elephant was shot on the top of a hill, the nearest water, which was drawn from a small marsh, being six miles away. To make things worse, the water was so full of decayed vegetable matter that it made myself and all the carriers ill. But such little trifles do not disturb the big game hunter much.

When night falls the big collection of dried logs, which is to constitute the camp fire, is lighted and forms an integral part of camp life at night. Not only is it exceedingly pleasant to watch the crackling flames leaping from the heart of this mass of logs, every now and again accompanied by showers of sparks, the flames lighting up the shadowy trees around the camp, but the warmth is a necessary thing when the evenings are so cold. When dinner, wonderfully well-cooked considering the primitive nature of the bush kitchen, is finished, the hunter puts on his thickest overcoat and his boy carries a deck chair as close to this big fire as the heat will allow. Then the evening pipe is lighted and smoked placidly till burnt out, and as early to bed is the rule to ensure the equally early rising, the hunter tumbles into bed, and it seems then but a few moments before he is again awakened by the boy bringing into his tent his early breakfast, so sound and dreamless is the well-earned night's rest in this country.

CAMP LIFE IN THE BUSH

If the hunter has been some time in the country, long enough to understand the native language, he can be much amused in listening to the conversation and stories of his native gunbearers and porters as they sit grouped around his camp fire. There will be other fires, of course, in his encampment, at which groups of men will be seated cooking their evening meal of porridge; or, if the hunter has been successful in providing them with meat, these fires will be decorated with sticks stretched across it, over which will be hung long strips of drying meat. In such a case the natives will sleep and eat, and eat and sleep all night long, so fond are they of meat. The large camp fire, though, which is in front of the tent is reserved for the white man and the more aristocratic of the natives, such as his gunbearers and game trackers. It is from these men that one hears the histories of the exploits of chiefs, their battles in the past, or their cruelties to some of their unfortunate subjects. One also may hear other sportsmen discussed, most often under some native name which has been given to them, possibly an unflattering one due to some peculiarity in appearance, or characteristic of the actions of the white man under whom the natives have served. If he is a well-known hunter, and a good shot, like my friend Mr. Marshall, so many years the Magistrate at Abercorn, and lately acting as Deputy

Administrator for the territory, he will have a favourable name given to him, which may be known for hundreds of miles in all directions. Thus, Mr. Marshall's is "Tambalika," which means "a man who lays low," a tribute to his skill with the rifle.

Natives, generally, are inveterate gossips, having nothing else to do, and are very fond of discussing the shortcomings of some of the women of their villages; but oftener than not they describe some successful chase by a white sportsman of an elephant, lion or rhino, and the part they themselves have played in the drama. Sometimes one comes to the conclusion, on hearing the talk of their prowess on such occasions, that the white man had really very little to do with the successful result.

When one can get them in a favourable mood they have numbers of folklore or other stories to tell. Many of these stories have the rabbit for a hero. This rabbit is really a species of hare which leads a somewhat solitary life and whose greatest enemy is the fox. The native name for this rabbit is Kalullu. In these stories he frequently outwits the fox. One of these tales is as follows:—

A rabbit one morning, while nibbling the grass upon a plain, saw his enemy, the fox, approaching and called out to him, "Good morning, Fox, have



Typical "Msito" Wood on Plain.



Shooting Camp with machila hammock (Author's tent on right).



CAMP LIFE IN THE BUSH

you heard the news?" The fox, on seeing himself discovered, sat down and replied as genially as possible, "No, Old Rabbit, what have you to tell?" "Last night," said the rabbit, "my wife had a baby, and she has asked me to go out and kill a lion as she wants the skin to carry the baby in." The fox was astounded, and asked the rabbit how he was going to do it when he had found the lion. "Very easily," said the rabbit. "As I left my home this morning I saw a lion lying up amongst the rocks, not far from where we are now, and I am just going home for my bow and arrow, and I will shoot him through the heart as he lies asleep." The fox became full of jealousy, and wishing the rabbit a hasty good-bye, dashed off home for his bow and arrow to get ahead of the rabbit. When he had disappeared the rabbit made for where the lion was lying asleep, and jumping quickly on his back and off again, woke him up, and from a safe distance called out to the angry lion, "Look out, the fox is coming to kill you with his bow and arrow." The lion, thoroughly aroused, waited for the fox and promptly jumped upon him and slew him before he could shoot his arrow. The rabbit, having watched the slaying of his enemy, returned to his family with much satisfaction.

Here is another story of the Kalullu:—
Having heard that all the buck were meeting

together in the forest to have a beer drink, the Kalullu was much annoyed at not receiving an invitation from the eland who issued them. He said to himself, "I eat grass just the same as the buck do, why should I be left out?" and determined to be present at the gathering. The difficulty was that he had no horns to entitle him to be admitted. However, he thought he would remedy this, and hunted about in the bush until he found the skull of a bushbuck, from which he removed the horns. The attachment of the horns to his head did not bother him long, for, by means of some beeswax which he abstracted from a nest in an ant-hill, he managed to stick them on, and then proceeded gaily to the feast. He was received with politeness, though the buck were unable to place to what species he belonged, but they were too polite to question his credentials. The Kalullu enjoyed himself immensely and drank much beer, boasting at the same time of his skill and prowess in the woodland. While thus engaged he did not observe that the sun was mounting high in the heavens, and that the buck, according to their custom, were moving off under the shade of the trees, leaving him almost alone beside the beer pot. As the heat of the sun reached his horns the wax melted and off they came, which fact Kalullu was too drunk to notice till a sudden kick from the eland made him realize that

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his fraud had been detected, when he made off as rapidly as his beery condition would allow.

Another story explains how the cat came to be associated with women. The story runs that the cat, being tired of living amongst the rocks, wished for more comfort in its life, combined with security. On proceeding to the plains it saw a large eland buck, and associated itself with the eland, following it about. At the end of some weeks the eland was attacked and killed by a lion, and the cat followed the lion, as its idea was to attach itself to the strongest animal. It lived with the lion for a long time, and lived well upon the remains of the lion's repasts.

The cat was very contented now with its lot. One day the lion, after a heavy meal, fell asleep close to a stream. A large bull elephant coming down to drink was annoyed to find the lion there, and put his tusks through him. The cat seeing the lion was dead thereupon followed the elephant as being a stronger animal. The poor cat often became tired following its huge new friend about, as he went wandering through the bush, but not knowing or having seen any animal stronger than the elephant it had to stick to him in spite of the discomfort.

One day its huge friend stood under the shade of a tree dozing and the cat was lying some little dis-

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tance off, when the cat was not only startled by a sudden explosion near it but was horrified to see its friend tumble down, and lie motionless on the ground. From out the bushes came a creature upon two hind legs who walked up to the elephant, and pointing, what seemed to the cat, a stick at the prostrate body of its friend, produced another explosion which made the cat jump away.

The cat watched this creature, who was a brown man, cut off the tail of its late friend, and reasoned thus:—"My first friend the eland was the biggest of bucks, but the lion killed him; the lion, which all buck seem to fear, was killed by my late friend the elephant, who was so big and strong that he pulled down the trees as easily as I should pull a grass blade. Now this small creature walking on two legs has killed my late friend with the noise he has made from the stick he carries. I must follow him."

This the cat did till the man reached the village and went into one of the huts, upon which the cat jumped on to the roof where it slept the night. In the early morning the man came out of the hut and went into another, and the cat jumped down and waited outside. Scarcely had the man gone in before he rushed out again with a woman behind him who beat him furiously over the head and shoulders with a porridge stick, till he disappeared

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out of sight. "This," said the cat, "is good enough for me. This creature with the stick is stronger than the man who killed the elephant," and the cat followed the woman into the hut and sat down beside the fire, and still sits beside the woman at the fireside.

Now for the last story, which contains a most obvious moral.

A man who had been to a neighbouring village for a beer drink left this village in the early morning to return to his own. A little way out, as he followed the native path he saw a human skull lying on the grass, and, being in a light-hearted mood, he gave it a jab with the butt end of his spear, saying, "O skull, what killed you?" The skull immediately replied, in solemn tones, "Talking killed me." Horrified, the man ran back to the village he had just left, calling up the inhabitants to relate the dreadful experience he had had, and the chief, hearing the commotion, sent a messenger to the place whence the noise was proceeding to ask why the peace of the village was being thus disturbed. The messenger returned to the chief and told him that the stranger who had spent the previous night in the village had returned very frightened, with a tale of having met a skull which spake. The chief then said, "Send two of my guards to accompany the man to where he found

the skull. Let them take spears, and if the man is a liar they shall put the spears into him so that he die." When the party came to the place where the skull lay, the stranger stopped in front of the skull, the guards being behind him, and calling to the skull said, "Speak again." This he did thrice and the skull was silent. Then the guards drove the spear through him, and as the man fell dead the skull thus spoke once again, "Talking killed me."

Chapter VI

BUSHCRAFT

T is very doubtful whether the hunter, who has but little power of observation or discrimination, would ever be successful in his calling. Much of the charm of big game hunting lies in the fact that it not only calls out all that is physically best in a man, but also gives him the keenest mental pleasure in the knowledge that he is pitting his skill against animals in which the instinct of preservation has reached an acme so that the chances are as much in favour of the animal escaping as of falling a victim to his rifle. Even when a hunter is not actively engaged in following up any particular spoor but is simply moving from one camp to another site, there is always a keen pleasure in trekking through the African woodland or in following a native path which zigzags through belts of timber or over open spaces, now skirting a marsh, then crossing some river by a flimsy bridge of trees, or, if the river be too large, by canoes dug out of solid tree trunks. As all the transport in

this northern territory has to be carried out on foot, the time available for observation of the natural flora and fauna is very great. As the hunter follows this path, one of the many thousands which intersect the territory throughout its length and breadth, he will unconsciously acquire some of that habit of ever constant watchfulness which the ordinary natives have developed through centuries of having to take care of themselves. The big things will strike him first, such as the ponderous track of an elephant, or the broken branches and uprooted trees left by the feeding herd, and, if he has any imagination, he will have a thrill of awe at the mighty power which these animals show in uprooting large trees, and he will almost expect to see some huge grey form with gently flapping ears standing amongst the damage he has done. As the hunter emerges from the woodland across some open plain, his path may be crossed by another and rougher track made by a herd of buffaloes. Possibly in the distance he may see a few brown forms moving slowly towards the shade of the trees, and, if he has had previous experience, he may be able to identify these distant moving forms as roan, hartebeeste, or possibly sable. Frequently, also, when crossing these plains, he may see vultures slowly circling in the blue sky above, or rising, with heavy flight, from some part of that same

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plain, telling of the remains of some victim killed by a lion during the night.

The essence of bushcraft, then, is the development of the habit of observation. It comprises a knowledge of such things as being able to keep one's direction by the sun, which includes a knowledge of the four points of the compass, and making mental note of outstanding features of the landscape such as a particular hill, stream, mass of rocks or solitary patch of trees in a plain. By this knowledge a hunter need never get lost should he be so unfortunate as to get separated from the natives who accompany him or carry his guns. One exceedingly important thing for all hunters to observe is the direction of the wind, for it is on the wind that scent is carried, and it is through this scent that all animals are made aware of danger. In Central Africa, as we have said, the two prevailing winds are the North-East Trades which blow from April till September, starting at seven o'clock in the morning and ceasing at five o'clock in the afternoon, and the South-West Trades which usher in the rainy season. These latter winds are much more irregular than the former, and often make hunting difficult by their fitfulness, now blowing strongly and steadily, then swirling so that the hunter, when following game, will find it particularly difficult to come up to them. When spooring

during the dry weather, which is the usual time for sportsmen to visit the country, that is to say after the bush fires of July and August have made it possible to see game easily, the usual procedure is to pick up a handful of dust and allow it to filter slowly through the fingers, which gives a ready indication as to the direction in which the wind is blowing. Unless this is done one may disturb the game by crossing the wind. It goes without saying that to get a shot at game one must approach them up wind, and this, when following the spoor, is not an easy matter. Frequently it necessitates leaving the spoor and making a detour in the endeavour to locate the game without alarming them through their sense of smell.

Another very important thing to observe is the art of moving silently. All living creatures in Africa do this, and the natives say that it is only the European who likes to hear his footfalls. Experienced hunters wear canvas or rubber-soled shoes when following game to ensure quietness of approach.

When searching for game, such as buck, there are various indications which are looked for, the most important of these being the hoof-marks, from which the hunter knows the species of game and numbers in the herd. Having found these hoof-marks, the question next arises whether they

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are recent. There are several ways of discovering this. The rough and ready way, which is always adopted by natives, is to search for droppings. If these are hard and dry there is no further need to examine the hoof-marks. If, however, only the hoof-marks are there, then these are examined carefully for bits of broken grass or bruised leaf; also to see whether the wind has partially obliterated some of them by blowing dust across them. If a piece of grass, cut by the sharp edge of a hoof, is quite fresh, then the spoor is a very recent one. If the dew lies thick upon this severed blade of grass it means that the buck have passed that way some time during the night. If, on the other hand, the piece of grass is dry and brown, then the buck have passed probably during the previous afternoon. These observations are made at sunrise, which is the usual period of the day at which hunters sally forth to kill.

During the wet weather spooring is an easy matter; all hoof-marks are well defined in the damp soil, and, as the rains fall every day, it is only the impressions made by buck or other animals between the showers which show distinctly. Following the spoor over dry, hard and dusty ground is often a very difficult matter, even if the tracker is assisted by the presence of occasional drops of blood. The wind and the sun dry up this blood

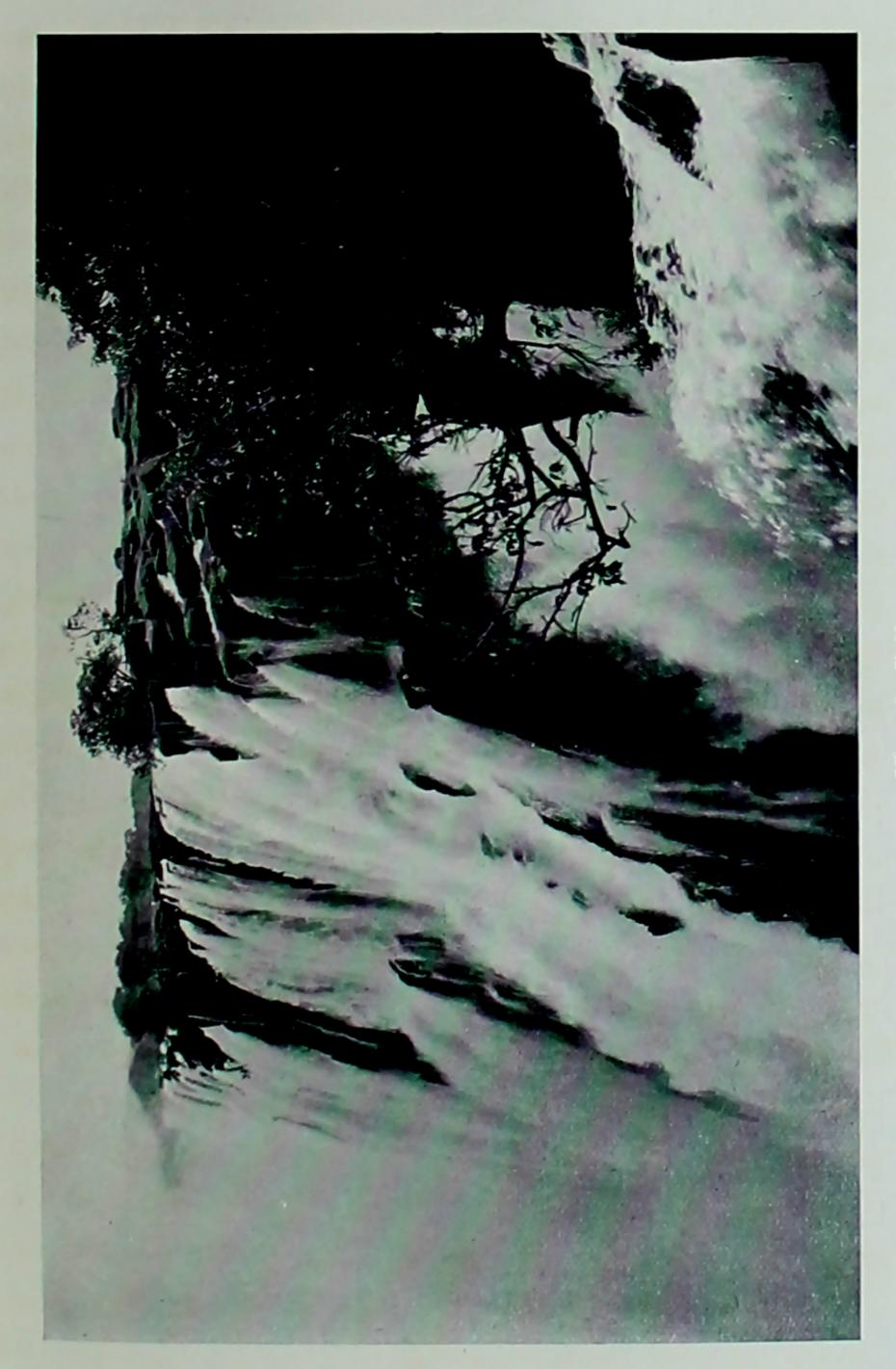
so fast that it may be a very slow and tedious job to pick up a little dark spot upon a blade of grass or stone, possibly at long intervals, especially when the hoof-marks have left but slight impression. Sometimes I have taken over an hour to follow a half-mile spoor rather than abandon a buck which I had wounded. At other times I have had a whole day thrown away following the spoor of a wounded eland which I could never make up to. A true hunter always regrets having to abandon a wounded animal, and if he is forced to do so his hope is that the wound is only a flesh one and that the animal recovers.

When the hunter has been in the country some time he will learn from the natives the distinctive foot or hoof marks of all animals, even down to the tiny dots made upon a piece of smooth ground by the little field mouse. Some of the hoof-marks of the buck are very typical, such as the sharp, long impression made by the reedbuck, or the sharp pointed triangle of the hartebeeste, but it is not always so easy to discriminate between an impression made by the roan and sable antelopes. Possibly the hoof-marks of the sable bull are less coarse than those made by a roan. The hoof-marks of a buffalo cow may frequently be taken for those of an eland bull and vice versâ, especially when buffalo have wandered

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into a district, which is not their usual habitat, as they sometimes do. Such an occurrence once happened in my experience. I was out looking for eland, which had been doing a lot of damage in the native gardens, close to a large village, when I came upon the fresh spoor of what my trackers, and I myself, thought were two bull elands. This was about 7 a.m. There were no droppings to correct this impression. I followed the spoor for half a mile and into some thick undergrowth where the animals had been resting. They had evidently heard us coming through the long grass and had broken away. For two hours I followed the spoor, the wind being very difficult and fitful, and then found myself in a deserted garden where the grass was some eight feet high. As I was going carefully through this grass there was a sudden rush a few yards in front of me and the animals tore out, but I could see nothing. I followed the spoor for at least another two hours, still seeing nothing, but finding where the annials had stopped under cover to wait for us and then gone on again. I was getting very tired and hot and was on the point of giving up the chase, as I knew that when eland are thoroughly frightened they will go all day. However, on getting through some thick bush I saw standing, some fifty yards off, in a somewhat clearer opening, not two cland but two

buffalo cows. I was carrying a service ·303 and had just time for a quick shot at the nearest animal before they charged off. As they both disappeared very rapidly into the bush and I had not heard my shot hit I sat down in disgust and commenced to blow up my native for not having discovered before that we had been following buffalo cows and not eland bulls, for then I would have been ready with a heavier rifle to make sure of my shot. Being both hungry and thirsty after this long stern chase I was busy with luncheon when one of my gun-carriers, distressed by my upbraiding, came up to me with a leaf on which was a large splash of blood. He had gone off to the place where the buffalo had charged into the bush to see whether I had hit them or not. Knowing the danger of following up a wounded buffalo, my men wanted me to desist from following as the grass was very long, but I thought I might as well have a try to pick up the trail. There was much blood and some froth, showing that my bullet had entered the lungs. I sent men up various trees to take observations, but they could see nothing, so I followed carefully the blood-stained track, my heavier rifle held at the ready for a possible charge by the wounded animal. The trail suddenly turned back upon itself and I thought we were in for some danger. On rounding a corner,



Victoria Falls.

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however, we came suddenly upon the buffalo lying stone dead in the place she had chosen to wait for us.

There was some excuse for my men not knowing that we had been following buffalo, as they had never been known in this locality in the memory of the natives. Of course there is never any difficulty in knowing the hoof-marks made by a buffalo bull, the impressions being very large and typical.

Both eland and buffalo, being heavy and largefooted animals, leave a distinct trail when moving through the grass, but even apart from the distinctive evidence of the droppings there is not much difficulty in determining the species which has made the trail. The trail of the eland is never so well marked, for though the herd may keep together for part of the way, they have a tendency to scatter as they move along to break a branch off a favourite tree to eat the leaves, and also, when going through grass, they lift their feet and step through it with much the same action as is used by a horse, so that the trail is often a broken one. On the other hand, the buffalo when travelling make a very distinct, even trail, each following each, and as they shuffle their feet as they move they trample the grass quite flat, making a pathway which leads without break, in a more or less straight line, only deviating to avoid obstacles, to the

destination the leader has fixed upon. Even if the leading bull leaves the trail at intervals to make observations as to the possibilities of danger, the herd remain on the trail.

The most difficult trail of all in the woodland to follow, even when the ground is soft, is that of the lion. Being a highly intelligent animal he will always, where he can, travel upon ground which leaves but little trace of his paws, and he has the cat's distinctive dislike for walking on wet ground, which he also finds tiring as he has to extend his claws to keep himself from slipping. For this reason, if he can get other food, he will very seldom trouble to hunt such buck as the puku or lechwe which live in marshy ground. Lions are very fond of making use of the smooth native paths when travelling, and after a light rain it is possible to follow their pad-marks for miles, but sooner or later these padmarks are lost as the lion reaches dry or rocky ground where he is so fond of lying up.

Another trail that is constantly seen upon the roads in the early morning is that of the hyena, which is ubiquitous, and will follow the path from village to village on the chance of pulling down a sheep or goat, or getting any stray bones thrown out by the villagers. Nothing comes amiss to him in the way of refuse, provided it can be chewed. On one occasion, when I was camping in a village, a hyena

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took from my tent door some large straps which had been used in the Soudan to attach to a guncarriage to be drawn by mules. They were enormously thick and strong, of oxhide, with copper fastenings and huge iron buckles. I was awakened during the night by hearing the clank of these buckles being dragged past my tent. I called my gunbearer, who was sleeping by the fire, and told him to follow the sound. This he did for some little distance, and then he returned saying that it was a hyena which had dragged the straps off into the bush. The next morning some of the villagers took up the trail and found that all that remained of the straps were the buckles, the leather and copper fastenings having quite disappeared. Hyenas have no courage but an enormous amount of cheek. At one of the stations a hyena mounted a four-foot brick veranda of the house of an official and carried off the green canvas hammock machilla to which were attached two water-bottles. The machilla was subsequently recovered, much damaged, with its leather bindings eaten off the ropes, but the water-bottles were never seen again though they were of aluminium covered with felt. I do not wish to suggest that the hyena may have eaten the water-bottles, but he probably took them home for his family to play with after he had taken off and eaten the felt cover.

One would not think that the skin of the foot of an elephant was an appetizing dainty for even a hungry hyena, and yet one of these brutes had the audacity to come on my veranda one night and enter a pantry in which the boy used to do the plate washing and where the foot was drying, and carried it off. Subsequently the toe-nails of this foot were picked up by a native amongst some rocks half a mile away, which seemed to show that the hyena had enjoyed his supper.

Leopard tracks, unless they enter a village after chickens or dogs, are very rarely seen, for their hunting is generally in the woodland where they follow the smaller buck or guinea fowl. The track of a leopard is like that of a lion only much smaller, and differs from that of the cheetah in that it shows no claw-marks, the cheetah having non-retractile claws like a dog or hyena. Where the ground is wet the impression of the claw-marks of the cheetah is visible.

In localities where rhino and hippopotami exist the distinctive difference in their foot-marks is in the number of toe-nails, the hippo having four to the three of the rhino.

Chapter VII

BUCK SHOOTING: THE ROAN ANTELOPE

THE first sight to a sportsman of one of the African bucks, either standing alone or in a herd, is always interesting. Whatever one may say of the cruelty of shooting innocent animals for the sake of sport, there is this to be said, that the chances of escape for the buck from the bullet are quite in the buck's favour. Not only are all African buck very wideawake to the presence of danger, but they keep a keen look-out for objects which are unfamiliar, and will seldom allow a sportsman to approach within what he thinks is a nice distance to shoot from. The buck has other views upon the matter, and considers anything under 150 or 200 yards to be quite unpleasantly near his object of suspicion. Frequently the hunter, if inexperienced, will lose many excellent chances of shooting his buck by attempting to get too near. He will often, as he stops to aim, have the annoyance of seeing the buck charge away in full retreat, alarmed by smell or sight of the intruder.

Many men who first start buck shooting suffer

from a curious affection of the nerves called Buck Fever. Never having myself suffered from it I cannot describe it, but I have heard other men discuss it as a curious inability to keep the rifle steady, due to excitement or possibly to over anxiety to take a steady shot.

I fancy the usual buck which is first fired at by the sportsman in Central Africa is either the roan or the hartebeeste. In my case it was a roan, and so I introduce the subject of buck shooting by the following notes upon the roan antelope. I do not intend to give any detailed description as to how I shot my first roan, but will quickly pass it over by saying that it was one of a herd standing amongst long grass, that the rifle was a 303 carbine by Greener, and that my shooting was so erratic that I hit my roan in the hind leg instead of the body. It was only by luck that I was subsequently able to get it, the broken hind leg preventing her, for it was a cow, from going fast through the long grass.

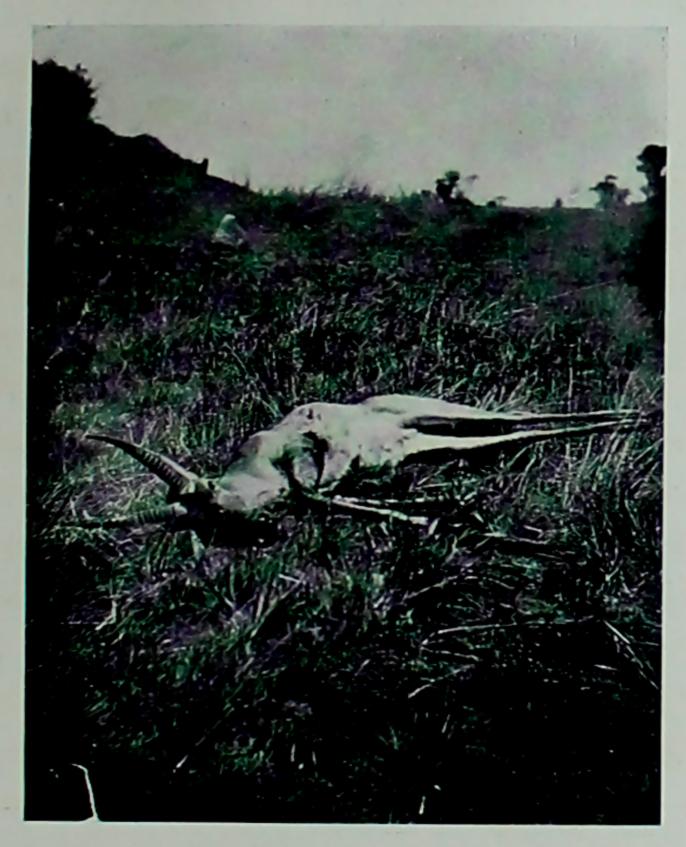
Between this episode of shooting my first roan and the time when I shot a head of horns worth keeping as a trophy, I shot several animals in different parts of the country, a good many of them being long shots at animals which I picked out on the plains as likely to carry good horns. Many of these were very large old cows, and the bulls

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were mostly disappointing in carrying worn-down or disfigured horns. I shot the first good bull carrying horns worth keeping in December, 1909; they were only 25 inches long, but as my disappointments had been many up till then I was quite pleased to get them. I was travelling officially, close to Lake Mweru, and one day I found myself encamped at a village called Lundi, which has the distinction of being the burial place of the Kings of Kezembe who were taken there from their capital on the Luapula River, 26 miles away. Here is buried as well the King Kezembe, who entertained Livingstone when he visited this district in 1867. I may say parenthetically that the sister of this king is still alive and in vigorous health and has a perfect recollection of Livingstone's visit to her brother. This district is a favourite one for game, and while travelling to Lundi I had seen the spoor of roan, hartebeeste and waterbuck, but never sighted an animal. After my arrival at the village there was a heavy rain during the night, which is always a welcome thing if there is spooring to be done. The country here is densely covered with bush, practically the only open spaces being the deserted sites of village gardens where the trees have been cut down. In such country the best chance a hunter has of getting a shot at buck is by quietly following recent spoor to where the buck have

stopped to rest. The native trackers following such spoor always keep a sharp look-out ahead, so that the hunter has plenty of time for a deliberate shot.

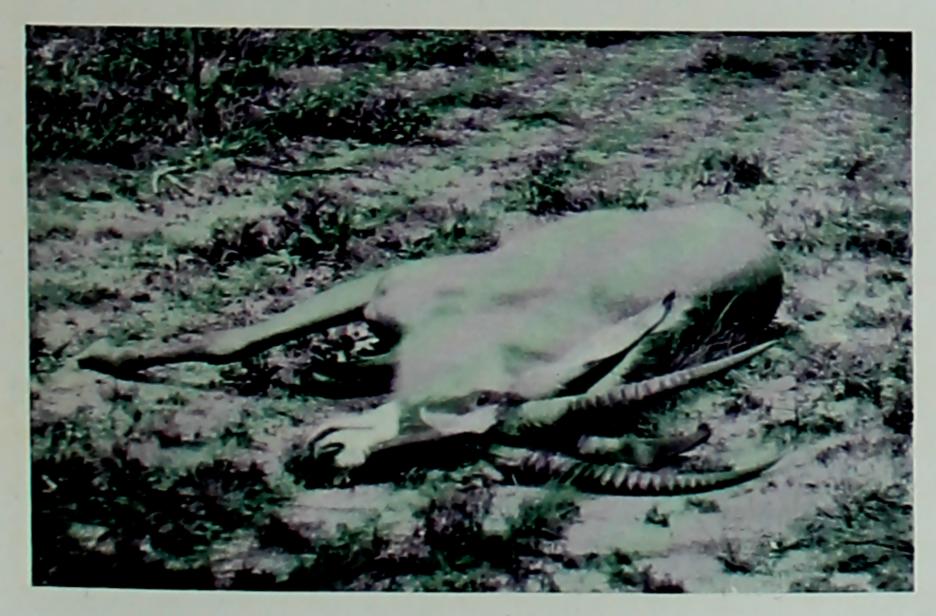
The morning on which I left Lundi opened dull and threatening, but as I did not want to waste time, I despatched my carriers early to follow the path which led to the next village some fifteen miles away and 2,000 feet higher up amongst the mountains. This climb entailed slow travelling upon the part of the caravan porters, and there is but little comfort for a white traveller who reaches his camp before his tent and equipment. I therefore took this opportunity of attempting to get some meat for my men, and sallied forth along the edge of the hills, accompanied by some natives on the look-out for buck or some fresh spoor. We had not gone very far when we crossed the fresh spoor of a large roan bull plainly marked in the rain-sodden ground. In order to avoid any chance of alarming the animal, ${f I}$ made all the natives but my gun-carrier sit down and wait while he and I followed it quietly, as, from certain indications, it was feeding as it walked and could not be far off. As a matter of fact we came upon it suddenly, feeding close to an ant-hill a few hundred yards further on, its back being towards me, and I managed to drop it at the first shot. It was a large old bull, the horns measur-



Photo]

Reed Buck.

[W. E. M. Owen.



Photo]

Bull Roan Antelope.

[F. H. Melland.

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BUCK SHOOTING: THE ROAN ANTELOPE

ing as I have already said, 25 inches. As soon as I fired the natives came rushing up with great joy to cut up the meat, for there is nothing the African native loves better than unlimited feasts of meat. Leaving a certain proportion of my men to transport the meat to the camp, I went on to see if I could shoot some more buck before climbing the hills, especially as the clouds had now disappeared and there was a bright sun and blue sky. The next animal I sighted close to a stream, was a waterbuck which was partly hidden by some bushes. The shot I fired from my Mauser never reached it, but resulted in one of the most annoying contretemps a hunter can meet within the bush. The cartridge proved to be a defective one and the bullet stuck in the barrel. My gun-carriers came up with a .303, and though the waterbuck had dashed off it did not go far, but gave me an opportunity of putting a bullet through it, upon which it dropped dead. While the men were cutting up the waterbuck I was hammering away at the bullet in the Mauser with a brass rod which belonged to the 303, but the only result was to ruin the brass rod as the bullet would not move.

The cutting up being finished, I despatched the rest of the men with the waterbuck to camp, so I was left with two gun-bearers and my native kapitao. The duties of the kapitao are to

transmit all orders to the natives; as a matter of fact he should have been in charge of my caravan, but, needless to say, thought it much more interesting to follow his master buck shooting. As we crossed the stream near where I had shot the waterbuck we found a great quantity of fresh roan spoor ploughing up the mud, which showed that they had been actually standing there and had been frightened off by the sound of the gun that I had fired at the waterbuck. Against the advice of Seremeni, my kapitao, who prophesied heavy rain, I obstinately determined to follow the spoor on the chance of repeating my success of the morning and getting another bull roan. I suppose we followed this spoor for 600 yards till it led towards a small plain on the slope of the hills. The sky was now overcast, and just as we reached the edge of the fringe of trees which borders the plain, we heard a loud rushing sound, such as heavy rain makes when travelling rapidly through the forest, and my men with one accord tore up handfuls of dry grass and rushed up to me for matches to get a fire started before the rain reached us. While they were building this fire ${f I}$ walked through the fringe of trees and saw two roan standing not more than 100 yards away, on the plain. I made my way rapidly back to the men and seized the .303, and returned to the spot from where I had sighted the

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buck. However, they had been alarmed by the smoke and were now well out on the plain. I had just time to fire a shot at the nearest, which was a quarter of a mile away, when the rain came down in a white sheet of water, wiping out everything. I took what shelter I could till the worst had passed, but of course was soaked to the skin. When the rain had somewhat lessened I crossed the plain to the other side where I had seen the roan disappear, and a short distance in found one lying dead; unfortunately, as far as the horns went for trophies, it proved to be a cow. My three men cut up this buck and hung it up in the trees as there was no one to carry it. We then made our way, cold and wet, up the mountains to find the camp which I knew was pitched close to a small village, but as none of us had ever been there we did not know how far it was from where we were, and our only guide was the native path, which of course could give us no indication of the distance we had to travel. As a matter of fact we got in at six o'clock, meeting a search party, half a mile from the village, who had been despatched to look for us. In the village I was luckily able to find an old Snider cleaning-rod left by some native policeman or messenger, and with this I was able, after much hammering, to dislodge the stuck bullet from my Mauser.

On another occasion, some months after this,

I had been out to try and get a shot for meat for my camp, and one of my men brought me word that he had seen two roan feeding on a small plain close by some woodland. Before I got there, some quarter of a mile away, heavy rain came down from which I had to take such shelter as the trees afforded. Instead of clearing up it became a light drizzle, cold and disagreeable, and I went on towards the plain with little hope of finding the roan still there. When I arrived there was nothing to be seen. On skirting the woodland towards the lower part there was a dip in the ground, and there the two roan were feeding, about a hundred yards off. I hit the first one straight away; it only went fifteen yards and stood again; another shot brought it down when its companion ran away for a hundred yards and then stopped facing me on the side of the hill. The light was now very bad as it was near sunset. Leaving the first, which, though not dead, was obviously too badly wounded to make off, I carefully took a shot at the other roan which was standing facing me, evidently puzzled at the behaviour of its companion. The shot hit, but the roan took no notice except to throw its head up. I walked carefully a little nearer, firing three more shots from my Mauser, none of which seemed to take effect, the light now being very bad. Still the roan took no notice but stood like a statue of

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stone, motionless. Determining to do something in the way of hitting and killing it, I walked rapidly towards it, firing another shot which I heard take effect, when it threw up its head and galloped off for a hundred yards or thereabouts. I changed my rifle for a .303 and got another shot in which took effect. The animal, however, went on for another fifty yards and then lay down, but rose again as I approached nearer. As it entered a small patch of timber at the upper part of the plain, I got another shot in which killed it. I then discovered the reason for its strange behaviour in not running away after the first shot. The bullet had entered the base of the left horn, close to the skull, and split the horn into four portions, thus probably dazing it completely with the concussion of the blow. The remaining horn measured 27 inches, so by a piece of bad luck, or bad shooting, I spoilt the best roan's head I had the chance of getting. The other roan was a young male with horns of no great account as trophies. On returning to the place where the latter lay I heard that it had just missed killing my gun-bearer who had incautiously approached too near with a knife to cut its throat as it lay on the ground. It had sufficient strength left to throw up its head with a backward sweep of its horns, just missing the man's stomach and actually tearing his clothes.

Several times I have seen one of these animals I have wounded just miss killing the native who had incautiously approached too near in order to despatch it with his spear. Like its near relation, the sable antelope, the roan, both male and female, when wounded and cornered, often proves to be exceedingly fierce and dangerous. Most natives who have gone out following a white hunter have a wholesome respect for a wounded roan, and will endeavour to disable it by throwing a spear from a safe distance, rather than risk possible serious injury by approaching too near it. I remember seeing a young bull roan chase one of my natives, though both forelegs were broken below the knee, and had not these legs been broken the animal would certainly have injured the man severely. It was surprising to see how quickly it travelled, disabled as it was. It is said by the natives that the roan antelope, if in a herd, will combine to keep off the attack of a lion by standing in a circle with their horns lowered. This may or may not be true, and I cannot vouch for its accuracy.

Besides being one of the fleetest of the antelopes, it is, with the possible exception of the eland, the most wary of all the African buck. When feeding in the open the roan keeps such a sharp look-out for danger that it becomes a very difficult matter to get near them, and this difficulty is

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increased by their restlessness when feeding, as they do not linger in one place but move about, cropping the grass on their way. The old bulls are frequently found wandering in solitude, and, whether they become careless with old age or less sensitive as to smell and hearing, it often is not difficult to get within easy range of one of them for a shot. If one has the time and patience, it is not bad sport to take up the spoor of an old bull when the ground has been softened by the first rain, and follow it up. It is surprising how far this trail may go before the roan finds a place to his liking where he can pass the hot hours of the day. This spooring of a buck is always interesting and is an education in gaining that knowledge of the habits of animals which is essential to the making of a successful hunter. From an examination of the marks of a buck's hoofs upon the ground he can learn how long it is since the animal has passed, whether he has been frightened, if he has finished feeding or is still on the feed; all important points which determine whether it is worth following the trail or otherwise. It is a greedy feeder, this antelope, and never seems quite happy unless well stuffed with grass. In the height of the dry season, when the bush fires have made it difficult for all the grass feeders to get sufficient to eat, these roan antelope will come into the village gardens and do a lot of

damage, trampling and destroying in a few hours the food of a family.

Roan sometimes display great curiosity to investigate some object which has attracted their attention, and with which they are unfamiliar. This trait can be taken advantage of to get a shot when there is no cover behind which the hunter can approach near a herd that is already on the alert. The method I have adopted, and which is used by sportsmen generally, is to tie a handkerchief or piece of cloth to the end of a stick, the stick being waved backwards and forwards by the hunter as he sits on the ground, his rifle within easy reach. The herd will approach nearer and nearer, sometimes within 150 yards, to satisfy their curiosity. The shot has to be fired very quickly, as directly the stick is dropped the animals wheel round and make off.

This antelope usually prefers its own feeding grounds, living as it does chiefly in well-wooded country. Sometimes it is the only buck, except the duiker, to occupy certain stretches of woodland where the grass is very coarse. On the other hand, in the dry season when water is scarce, it will come down to the lower valleys and be found in association with many other species of buck. I see in my game diary, under the date of September 8, 1908, that when close to Lake Mweru, three

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roan helped to form the items in a morning's mixed sport. At this period of the year the plains along the edge of the lake are plentifully covered with various species of buck. On this particular day I was trekking towards the Congo border. I had sent my carriers with tent, etc., to follow the road close to the lake, while I myself struck across the plain and woodland. Within a short distance of the village I had just left, on entering a patch of woodland, I came amongst a herd of roan, of which there must have been nearly twenty animals. I was carrying my .450 and was able to drop two bulls and a cow before the herd disappeared into the bush. These two bulls were both young, with half-grown horns. I wounded another one as it was disappearing, but there was very little to follow on the dry ground, and as possibly he was only slightly wounded I abandoned the chase. On leaving the woodland I came to a plain which, in the rains, is marshy and covered with long grass, and is then a favourite habitat of puku. At this time the grass had been mostly burnt off, the only cover for buck being patches of charred reeds. As I crossed the plain a puku bull jumped up from one of the patches and gave me an easy chance of shooting him with my ·303 carbine which formed my second rifle. Upon the other side of this plain, close to the wood, there were some ant-hills and thorn

bushes, and amongst these I shot three bushbuck bulls with the same rifle. I followed up this success by missing two reedbuck which had been lying under a tree and had dashed out on to the plain at the sound of the rifle.

As I approached closer to the lake to take the road that led to my camp, I came upon a herd of waterbuck, consisting of two bulls and six cows. One of the bulls I dropped with a shot through the lungs with the .450; although there is nothing notable about this head it now hangs amongst some of my other trophies. The shooting of this waterbuck finished a morning's sport in which I bagged eight buck representing four species, and had it not been for my unfortunate miss of the reedbuck there would have been yet another species to add to the bag.

Chapter VIII

BUCK SHOOTING: HARTEBEESTE AND PUKU

HAVING dealt with the common roan antelope I will now give some details of the far from graceful looking antelope, Lichtenstein's hartebeeste, which is a very common variety throughout the territory, where they are found in herds frequently consisting of ten or more. The first time I came upon them was amongst some thick trees, and I was so eager to shoot my first animal that I fired at the nearest, which disappeared with the herd, leaving a blood trail. On following the trail I came up to my wounded animal standing some hundreds of yards ahead under a tree, where I gave it a finishing shot. To my disappointment it was a young cow. It was only after some weeks of shooting that I learnt that when a herd of hartebeeste is standing amongst trees it is generally the cows that are upon the outside, and that to obtain a bull careful stalking has to be done. When out feeding on the plains it is of course much easier to distinguish the bulls from the cows owing to their larger horns.

I recounted in the last chapter a day's shooting where roan helped to make up a mixed bag of buck. I see in my diary under the date of November 15 in the same year, that I followed the same route as on September 8, making another mixed bag in which hartebeeste figured. On this occasion I struck through the plains instead of the woodland, as, owing to the fresh green grass, the buck were feeding in the open. Close to the native gardens of the village I had just left, and standing amongst a group of ant-hills, were seven hartebeeste, and by taking cover from one anthill to another I was able to get within eighty yards of the herd without being detected. On this occasion I was able to get my first shot at the bull, who was standing on the side of an ant-hill forming a good mark. The rifle I used all through that morning was my ·303 carbine. The buck dropped to the shot, but managed to get on to his feet again, but was only able to go a short distance before he dropped dead. The cows, alarmed, commenced jumping about in a stupid way, which is characteristic of these animals when they cannot locate the danger. As I wanted meat for my men I dropped two of the cows, and the rest of the herd having now discovered me made off.

Leaving the men to skin the hartebeeste, I started off, still following the plains, with my gun-

bearers, to shoot some more buck for the natives, but more especially to try to get some good heads for trophies. On the top of an ant-hill I saw the back of a bushbuck which was lying asleep, and as it was not more than thirty-five yards off a bullet soon finished it. This proved to be a cow. A little further on I shot another bushbuck in a similar manner. This, unfortunately, was also a cow. Owing to the thick grass I could not see its head before I fired. I then reached a part of the plain which is fairly open and free from ant-hills, and sighted a puku bull with two cows a couple of hundred yards away. I fired at the bull and saw that I had hit him, but he dashed off for a patch of bush, followed by his cows. As I entered the bush to look for him he sprang out of some cover where he had been hiding and I bowled him over. My first shot had hit him in the hip, and as these animals have extraordinary vitality, sometimes going miles upon three legs, I was lucky to get him His horns were a handsome pair, though not of any great length, and are now mounted upon a shield.

On this plain, after I had fired my first shot at the puku, a reedbuck got up with two cows, and on reaching a distance of about a quarter of a mile away stood watching my subsequent proceedings with much curiosity. The temptation to have a

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shot overcame me and I slowly shortened the distance, walking in the open towards them. They allowed me to get within 200 yards and fire a steady shot which dropped the bull dead. I am ashamed to say that I shot the two cows as well, though I have forgotten whether it was because they might feel lonely at the death of their lord and master or because I thought the meat might be useful for my caravan. In any case, this gave me a bag of nine animals consisting of four species.

I do not think there is a more ungainly buck in appearance than the hartebeeste in Africa. With its long sloping back and angularity of outline, and long narrow head carried upon a ewe-like neck, its general appearance is one of uncouthness; when seen at close quarters it even seems uglier, for the length of its head is accentuated by the peculiar formation of the horns, carried by both male and female, and the eyes are unlike the soft dark eyes of most buck. Its expression is one of stupid melancholy. When in action, as in running away, it seems to jump along the ground on four stilts rather than legs. In spite of this ugly action it possesses great speed and endurance, and, on the authority of that great hunter Selous, the hartebeeste is able to run a horse to a standstill in open country when the sportsman attempts to run one down. Their character is much like their appear-

ance, and they frequently fall victims to what I might call their stupid indecision in making up their minds to flee at once when a shot is fired at them by a hunter. If a herd of hartebeeste is approached so that they do not sight or smell the sportsman it is possible to kill many animals out of a herd before the rest take to flight. When the first shot is fired, especially if the leader of the herd is killed, the rest stand motionless and seem to make no attempt either to locate the danger or flee from it, and I am sure on many occasions it might be possible to wipe out a whole herd. I have taken advantage of this trait in the hartebeeste's character to supply my caravan with plenty of meat on various occasions without trouble. I see in my notebook that one of these occasions was on August 17, 1909, upon some hills beyond the Kalangwesi River. These hills were burnt clear of grass, the only cover being a few thin bushes and some boulders. On this occasion I was out to shoot meat for my men, and the first thing I sighted in the way of buck was a herd of hartebeeste some distance away. This animal, owing to its red and fawn coloured skin, is very conspicuous a long distance off. By making the most of the cover, which entailed some tedious, not to say painful crawling, as, being clothed in shorts, I had bare knees, I managed to

get behind a stone where I lay full stretched upon the ground 150 yards from the herd. I was using a ·303 service rifle. There were two bulls, five cows and two calves in the herd. I promptly dropped the bulls, one after the other, and three of the cows, leaving the two cows with the young at foot.

Nearly every hartebeeste is found to have in the skull cavity peculiar flat maggot worms lying between the membranes of the brain and skull. My impression is that these maggots find their way up the animal's nose from wet grass. The natives say that these maggots act the part of adviser to the animal, telling it what to do in case of danger, but judging from the general behaviour of this buck I should say that the animal's advisers are singularly stupid. A large number of hartebeeste manage to escape even when severely wounded. Like the puku, it makes light of broken legs and other injuries. Often have I followed a wounded hartebeeste practically for the greater part of the day, and never had the opportunity of getting another shot to finish it. In cases such as these, where I have severely wounded a hartebeeste and not been able to get a chance of another shot after following for many hours, I put the native trackers on the trail, and many of the animals have been recovered, dead of course, the

following day. Unfortunately, these poor wounded animals have had to die a lingering death.

Every sportsman would gladly avoid the escape of badly wounded animals into the bush if he could, by shooting his buck dead with the first shot; but not even the very best shots with a rifle are always able to succeed in this. Rifle shooting at buck is entirely different from target shooting where the distances are known; every sportsman, wherever he may be, whether in Africa or India, has to learn to judge his own distance before firing at buck. It is only by long practice that such accuracy may be acquired as to enable the sportsman to place his bullets to kill more animals outright than he wounds.

The common length of horns carried by the bull hartebeeste is 18 to 19 inches; anything over 20 is good. Many variations in the shape of the horns are met with; some bulls have the tips of their horns almost meeting, while others have their tips widely diverging, and these latter make the handsomest trophies. I have also shot several hartebeeste, both cows and bulls, carrying only one horn, the other having been broken off just above the base. One bull I shot was unique in having a third horn growing in the centre of its forehead just above the eyes; this horn was circular and stood out some three inches. Unfortunately, in cleaning the skin from

the skull for preservation the horn became detached.

In many of the marshes, especially those which tend to dry up to a great extent on the cessation of the rain, are found the puku, often in herds numbering hundreds. The best localities are towards the Congo border, that is to say in the west of the territory. Though a herd may number hundreds, yet the big herd is comprised of many small groups, each under the leadership of a bull. When the puku are alarmed the herds break up, and one can then see the individual leaders making off with their respective cows in various directions.

There is a peculiarity in the behaviour of a puku bull when danger threatens his family which I have noticed in no other buck. The peculiarity is that the bull of this species deliberately attempts to draw the danger to himself and away from the cows and calves. When one of these small herds is followed the bull will suddenly dash off in an opposite direction from his cows and will stop, possibly 150 yards away, and stand quite rigid sideways to the pursuer. He looks as if he had suddenly forgotten something and was no longer troubling about the pursuer in his efforts to recall to his memory the thing he had forgotten. He will allow his pursuer to shorten the distance to a considerable extent without seeming to take the slightest notice of him.

During this time the cows will be quietly hiding themselves in some patch of grass or bush. As soon as the hunter stops to take aim the male puku will dash off in instant activity for another hundred yards or so, and will then stop again. If not dropped by a bullet he will continue to follow this procedure until he thinks his cows have had time to escape to safety, when he will dash off at top speed to rejoin them, perhaps half a mile away. There is then nothing left for the hunter but to go toiling over the plain after some other bull, who, if he gets a chance, will pursue the same tactics as the first.

There is a surprising difference in the appearance of these marsh plains during the rains and after the fires have burnt the grass off in the dry season. When the grass is long it is almost impossible to get a good chance of shooting a puku, for they remain hidden amongst the thick grass and possibly only show horns or occasionally a head here and there when one is on the look-out for a shot. If the sportsman attempts to walk through this grass at this time of the year, he will startle many puku who have been lying hidden amongst it. These animals will dash out close to him, and if he is ready he may get a snap shot at them as they go springing at top speed through the grass, but he will get little chance of a steady rifle shot. Towards the end of July these marshy plains present quite a different

appearance; the enormous growths of grass, amongst which the puku feeds and shelters, become yellow and dry; the pools which depend upon the rainfall dry up and grounds become hard and cracked. The only water now is in the series of pools, fed perhaps by a spring, or where a small stream runs through the centre of what was once a marsh. One day this grass is set fire to, either by the chance spread of a bush fire tearing over the country, or more often by the natives, and the flames rushing along in front of the brisk north-east trade winds, lick up all the grass, leaving only patches here and there. After the fire has passed there is a wide expanse of ashes and black, smoking debris, broken here and there by the small ant-hills, or some thicker tangle of grass and bush which has resisted the first onslaught of the flames. Within a few days the brisk trade winds, which continuously sweep over the plains, carry off this ash, leaving large surfaces of hard, brown soil. The puku, which have been driven out of the burning grass to some higher ground or woodland where the flames have not reached, now return and wander in disconsolate herds over this large expanse of arid bareness. They must be hard put to it for food during this time, but nature is very beneficent, and the heavy drenching dews which soak the ground soon vivify the grass roots of the larger tufts which have

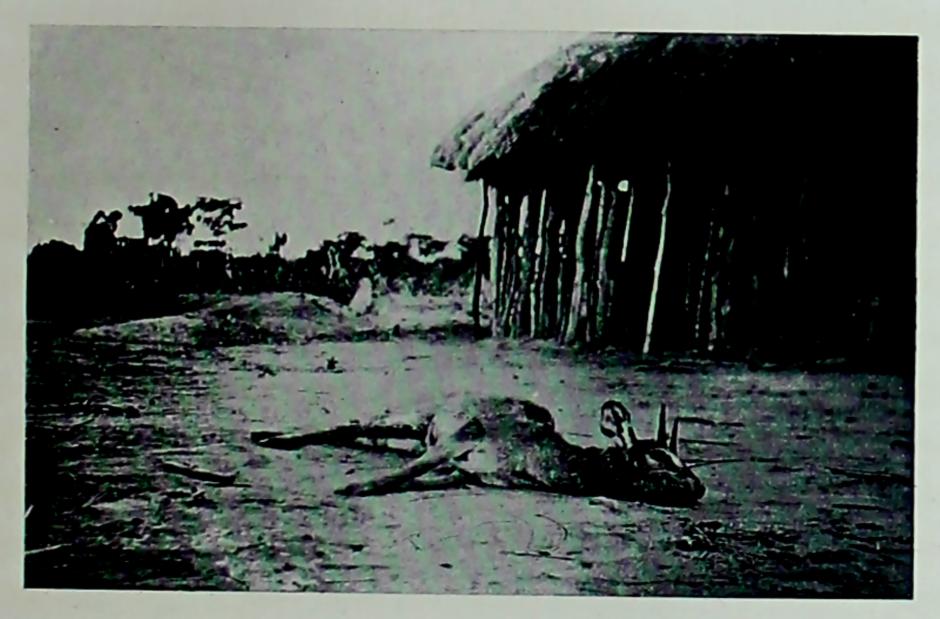
suffered least from the fire, and within a few days these tufts throw out fresh shoots of grass which are eagerly sought after by the buck. They now feed all day long, lying down to rest, then resuming their steady search for fresh grass blades.

If one examines the lungs of these buck at this period of the year, they are found to be strongly coloured with black, I suppose from the particles of burnt grass which they inhale, but this pigmentation of the lungs does not last, disappearing towards the time of the rains.

Puku have the reputation of being more difficult to hit than other buck. This I think is due to the fact that when they are standing on the open plain there is no background and the distance is hard to judge. Their hair also, being bright orange red, seems to shine when the sun is on it. Unless the distance is accurately gauged the majority of shots fired seem to be over the animal. I remember one occasion when I took such shots at a bull standing, as I thought, some 200 yards away. It dropped at the fourth shot. On pacing the distance to where it lay it proved to be only 130 yards off, and the bullet which had dropped it was high up in the neck. Every hunter who has shot puku could tell the same story of many bullets thrown away, and I have also heard that in some cases the hunter has exhausted his cartridges without showing

a single dead animal as a result. Possibly, the sun shining upon the bright hairs of the skin leads one to think that the surface aimed at is bigger than it actually is. I once made two brilliant shots at puku for neither of which I take the least credit. One early morning I was going along a plain, the sun being behind me, when I saw two young puku bulls standing with their backs towards me, about a hundred yards away. Taking careful aim at the shoulders of the nearest I fired, and it dropped stone dead. The other jumped away some ten yards and stood regarding the body of its fallen companion. Another careful aim at the shoulder of this other buck resulted in it dropping dead as well. On going up to where the dead bodies lay I found no mark of the bullet on the bodies, nor upon their necks or legs. One had been shot through the eyes and the other through the brain—marvellous shots, both of which ought to have been misses. By brilliant shots such as these one is humbled.

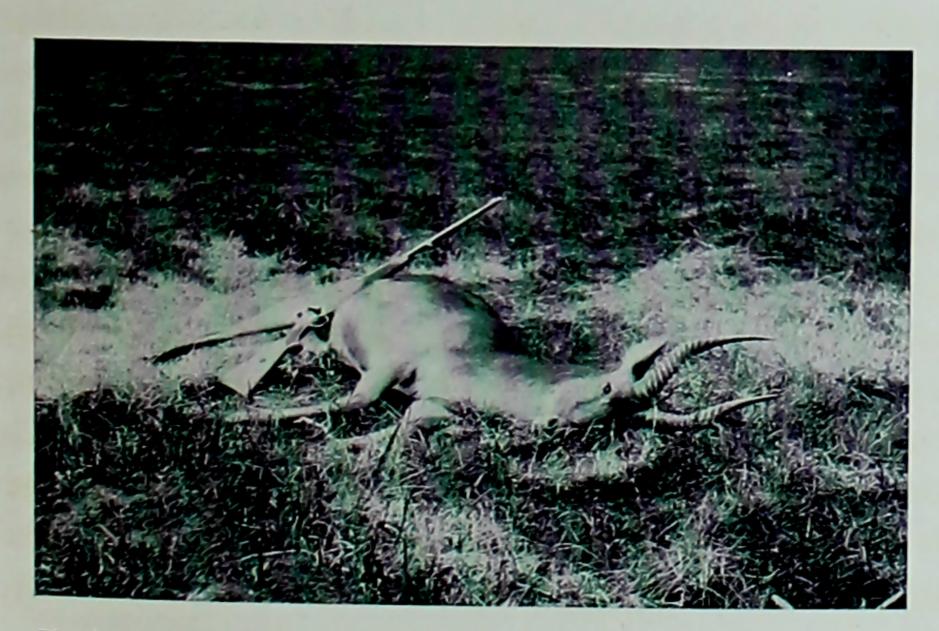
The size and shape of the puku horns, which, of course, are only found on the male heads, vary a great deal, the usual size being 14 to 15 inches. Curious to say, the best pair of horns I got was early in my shooting experience of these animals. They measured 18 inches, and I was never subsequently able, out of many dozen puku bulls shot to get another pair approaching this size.



Photo]

Klipspringer.

[W. E. M. Owen.



Photo]

Puku.

[F. H. Melland.

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There are two varieties of the puku in North-East Rhodesia, though this fact is not well known. The smaller one is found on the Chambezi River, and differs from the common variety in having a darker coat, and horns which are short and broader at their base, while the tips of the ears and edge of the tail are black. The natives differentiate between these two varieties, calling them by different names. The name for the ordinary puku among the Wawemba is "Nseula" or "Mporokoso," while the name for the smaller variety is "Mpala-mpala." As this name is given to the Mpala found upon the flats of the Luangwa River, the natives evidently think that this buck ought to be associated with the Mpala rather than with the puku.

The greatest number of puku bulls I ever shot in one day, having good heads, was five. This was upon the bank of the Kalangwesi River shortly after the grass had been burnt. There are large numbers of this animal upon these plains, though the natives are constantly netting them. I could have shot a large amount of these buck, but was only picking out the bulls carrying good heads, and from the description I have already given of the behaviour of the bull puku, and the tactics it pursues when leading the cows away from danger, it may be imagined that I put in some pretty hard, hot and dusty work before I managed to kill the five good

bulls. There were many villagers watching me toiling over the plains, as the puku were within sight of the village the whole time. I heard afterwards that the Chief thought I was a most extraordinary hunter because I persisted in toiling after one or other bull puku when I might have shot dozens of cows without trouble. The natives' idea of sport consists in killing for the pot. It took some months of instruction to educate my gun-bearers up to my point of view, that the white man in his madness prefers to shoot the male rather than the female buck. The fate of these five heads was a sad one. I left them under the charge of the Chief to clean and dry for me, and gave him three shillings for his trouble. A few weeks later, when I sent a messenger to ask the Chief why he had not brought the heads in, the reply came that they had all been eaten by a hyena. Unfortunately they had been left out on the slope of the grass roof of a hut during one night, soon after they had been shot, and presumably the high degree of putrefaction had attracted the attention of one of these scavengers of hyenas who promptly thought that his duty was to remove them. Such annoying accidents will happen from time to time to all sportsmen shooting in wild countries, where skill and labour in obtaining trophies are made of no avail by the stupidity of some underling. Thus a friend of mine lost a

magnificent roan head through such carelessness. He had shot this roan upon a plain during the dry season, and on measuring the horns with a tape he had in his pocket found that they were 30 inches in length, which is exceedingly exceptional. Leaving the animal he went off after another, when a fire suddenly started up behind him and swept rapidly over the plain. On returning, when the fire had passed, to the place where the roan lay, he found the horns all charred and ruined. Some of the natives had made a small fire upon which they were roasting bits of the buck's liver which they are fond of eating fresh from the buck. The sparks from this had set the plain on fire and ruined the best pair of horns my friend ever got.

In my opinion the best rifle for shooting puku is the ·303 with a soft-nosed bullet. The sighting of this rifle is so accurate that it is possible to make good shooting at puku a long distance off, and thus save a large amount of toiling over plains upon which there is but little cover. The best period of the day to shoot this buck is undoubtedly the early morning, before the sun is much above the horizon. They are then busily occupied feeding and are much less easily alarmed; in addition they make better marks for a bullet than when the sun is well up. As I have said, during the day, although they are quite visible upon the plains, the heat of

the sun makes the exercise of pursuing them a hard task, and moreover the puku are now wishing to rest and are more intolerant of the approach of an intruder.

Chapter IX

BUCK SHOOTING: KLIP-SPRINGERS, WART-HOGS AND ZEBRAS

The sportsman, in the course of his trip, should take the trouble to climb one of the rock-crowned higher hills which are so typical of the scenery in the Plateau district of North-East Rhodesia, his trouble will be well rewarded. As he reaches the top, passing under the large shady trees which are found growing right to the summits of these hills, he cannot help but feel somewhat awe-struck at the sight of the gigantic rounded boulders which lie interspersed amongst these trees. Some of these boulders must weigh 50 to 100 tons, and are smoothly rounded, possibly by the constant rubbing of the glacial streams which have left them stranded many thousands of years ago.

When he reaches the top of one of these hills the sportsman will find out-crops of rock covered with lichen, with masses of orchids of two varieties, growing in the crevices, and festooning the sheltered parts with a glossy covering of bulbs and leaves. Amongst these rocks are flowers which bloom, how-

ever, only during the rains, and numerous small shrubs, one of which is distinctly scented like the lavender. This plant, when dried and mixed with native tobacco, makes an excellent fragrant smoking mixture.

Another characteristic formation of these hills is the picturesque little plains one comes upon when passing through the rocks. These little plains are covered with a short grass, and frequently have a bubbling spring in the centre, while dotted here and there are the flowering Masoso bushes, or the glossy-leafed Masuko plum trees.

As the sportsman goes wandering over these rocks, or skirts the edge of one of these enclosed spaces, he will get a sight of that most graceful little buck, the klip-springer, which is the chamois of Africa.

It is upon these hills that this little buck makes its home, living upon the plants which grow on the rocks. It cannot be called a shy buck, trusting to the natural background of the vegetation growing on the rocks and the colours of the rocks—which harmonize with its coat—to escape observation.

It requires a pretty quick eye to see them in the first place when they are standing motionless amidst natural surroundings, and the first sight is usually of a patch of yellow moving rapidly from rock to rock.

Occasionally the sportsman may see one of these

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buck poised motionless upon the summit of some rock higher than the rest, and presenting such a good mark for his rifle that he can scarcely fail to kill it. If he should desire to keep its skin as a trophy I may give him a word of warning, that he should not allow the natives who are with him to touch the animal with a knife for at least four hours after he is dead. If this caution is disregarded all the hair will at once fall off the skin, making the trophy valueless. The hair of this buck is quite unique in its way, being stiff and tubular, and very rough.

The males carry horns of 3 inches to $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and anything over this length must be regarded as good. Although I have shot many I never got one worth keeping. I always regret an excellent chance I let slip of getting one of these bulls just before I left to come home. I wounded an eland bull early in the day, and had followed it for many hours from the valley below to where he took me right up the top of one of these high hills, some miles south of Kasama. He finally took me through a gap in the rocks crowning the summit which led into one of the open spaces I have described, where a small stream started from a spring in one part of it, which he visited to drink. By the time I had got here it was about half-past five in the afternoon, and I had been all day upon the trail. Standing on

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the rocks close to the spring was a very good male klip-springer with his cow, presenting an excellent mark for my rifle.

I was expecting every moment to see the eland which I had been following, and so restrained myself from firing at this klip-springer, for fear of startling the eland, which I judged must be only a short distance away. However, I could still see nothing of the eland, after following its track for another quarter of a mile, and, as it was near sun-down, and I had a walk of some eight miles to get back to camp, I had to abandon the chase.

As I passed the spring on my homeward journey, I had a fleeting glimpse of the klip-springers, but could not then get a shot, as dusk had fallen, and on my attempting to get near they disappeared amongst the rocks, and I saw no more of them.

I got back to camp after an arduous picking of my way through the bush, and had a belated dinner about nine o'clock, after a thoroughly disappointing day, the eland having escaped, and I having neglected to take the chance of the klip-springer—which I might have got. Thus I had no trophy to show for my day's work.

The best specimen shot in the territory was killed by Mr. Stewart close to Mpika, at the end of 1910; the horns measured 6½ inches, beating all previous records.

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On the same hills the sportsman may frequently meet that ugly animal, the wart-hog. These animals are found in the woodland, where they make their home in deserted ant-bear holes, which they enlarge for their particular requirements; they prefer rocky country such as these hills afford, and make their home amongst the rocks.

In the early morning they go wandering about the open spaces, either solitary or, more usually, in small herds, digging up with their tusks the roots on which they live. A large boar, when met with suddenly, face onwards, presents a most truculent aspect, with his huge ungainly head ornamented with the excrescences which give him his name, and with his long and gleaming tushes curving upwards.

As a matter of fact this appearance of truculence belies his nature, for even when wounded, he seeks to escape. I have not known of any occasion when he has charged the sportsman who has injured him, thus differing from the bush-pig, which will frequently attempt to retaliate upon his aggressor.

Some of the tusks taken from wart-hog and boars in East Africa have been enormous in length. The biggest I ever shot in Northern Rhodesia measured 9 inches along the curve outside the jaw.

The skin of the wart-hog is very tough, and frequently, when wounded, they will manage to escape and make for their burrows, so it is more

satisfactory to use a heavy bore rifle when shooting one of these animals. The flesh is poor and watery, and never eaten by Europeans. In the days when the Chief's power was paramount amongst the Wawemba all wart-hogs killed were the property of the Chief, and considered royal game. Any infringement on the part of the man who killed one and did not deliver up the body intact to the Chief, was punished by death.

On these hills zebra also may be seen frequently, the common variety being Burchell's. In the northern part of the territory, on the high hills close to the Congo border, I have shot Grant's zebra, which makes its home almost exclusively amongst the high hills. The Burchell zebra is very wide-spread, and common everywhere, and is mostly a dreadful nuisance to the sportsman who is out after other game. There is scarcely a locality where they are not found.

During the rains they take to the woodland and especially the high hills, climbing during the heat of the day to the summits, where they stand about amongst the rocks. They are frequently accompanied, especially when feeding on the plains just before the rains start, by roan, sable, hartebeeste or eland. When thus accompanied by buck they are very watchful for danger, owing to the curious fact that other buck, who may be feeding upon the

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same plain, trust the zebra to keep watch for the common safety of all. This watchful habit will often spoil a sportsman's chance of getting a shot at one or other of the game, especially on those plains where cover is bad, and approach is consequently difficult.

Zebra are endowed with wonderful eyesight, and will at once stop feeding and throw up their heads at the sight of any object which may venture out of cover. The buck feeding will at once stop doing so, and will stand watching the zebra, satisfied that what has put the zebra on the alert is of sufficient importance for them to be prepared for ready flight.

This long-sightedness of the zebra defeats the precautions to shoot up wind; where cover is scanty it is quite possible to approach other game upon a plain by moving very quietly, as buck trust to smell rather than to sight. Once, however, the zebra discovers the approach of a man, he will not return to his easy feeding till the man has disappeared.

A herd of zebra has on many occasions spoilt any chance I may have had of getting a shot at a buck carrying good horns, and this happens to every sportsman. Frequently I have been stirred with feelings of rage and revenge, and have been tempted to empty my rifle at the zebra as they

galloped off, taking every buck on the plain with them.

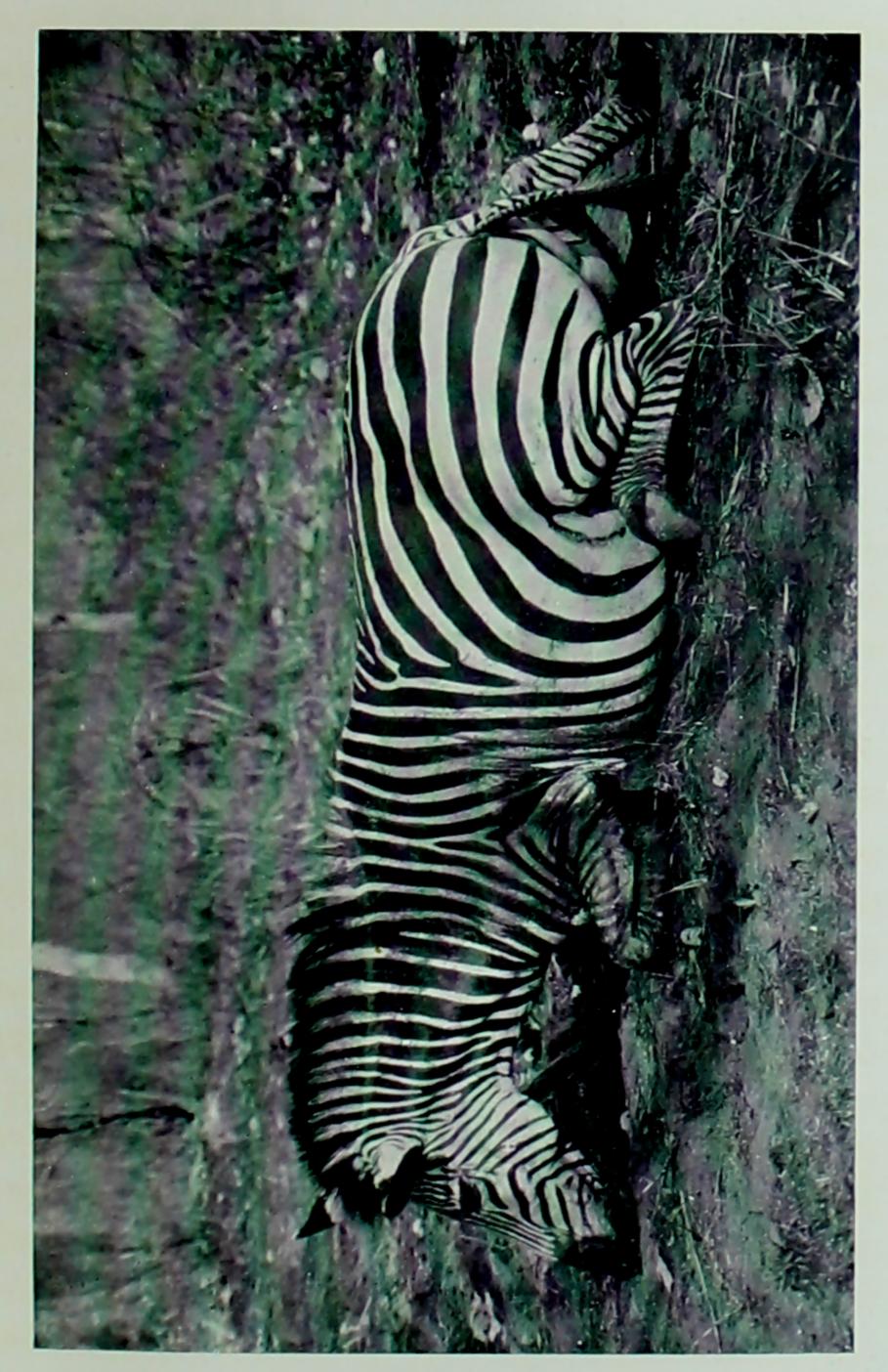
From this it will be seen that the zebra, in spite of their decorative coats, are an intolerable nuisance for the sportsman who is on the look-out for other game. One does not wish to shoot them, as they are quite useless, except for the purpose of feeding the native carriers, who are extraordinarily fond of their flesh.

Lions also prefer the flesh of zebra to that of any other animal: possibly because they fall an easy prey to a lion who may be ensconced on the top of an ant-hill on the look-out for an evening meal.

At other times a herd of zebra resting during the heat of the day in some thick woodland, or upon the summit of one of these high hills, may allow a sportsman to get within fifty yards or even closer before they take to flight. When they do so they make such a noise with the rattling of their hoofs over the stones, that they are sure to disturb any eland or sable antelope, or other buck which may be in the vicinity.

This animal is a greedy feeder, and when the fresh grass is growing after the fires, they may be seen feeding all day long upon the plains, trying to fill themselves.

I found when shooting them for food for the natives that if they are a long way out on the plain



Common Zebra.

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so that an accurate shot is not easy, a bullet fired into their bodies through the stomach or bowels quickly cripples them.

The natives explain this by saying that the large amount of gas which escapes from the ruptured bowels or stomach into their abdominal cavity prevents them from running far.

On the big plains which border the Chambezi River, these animals exist in herds of hundreds, in association with roan, hartebeeste, eland, puku, reed-buck and duiker.

Chapter X

BUCK SHOOTING: LECHWE

THE graceful Lechwe, of the large Cobus family of African buck, is always found in large herds on marshy ground. There are two varieties in North-East Rhodesia, the red and the black. The latter variety is much more numerous, and is chiefly found upon the immense wet flats of Lake Bangweolo. These flats extend for miles and are covered with short grass growing out of the water. Much of the ground, though marshy, is not difficult to walk over, the consistence being fairly hard; in other parts there are deep water holes where the incautious hunter may plunge up to his waist, or even over head and ears. As these flats gradually shelve down towards deeper portions of Lake Bangweolo the ground becomes more sludgy and, therefore, too dangerous to walk upon. The lechwe, however, which has peculiarly shaped hoofs, long and widely open, goes skimming over this ground in a surprising manner. It is a beautiful sight to see a herd of perhaps 200 animals, led by a splendid old bull, charging in full career over a

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marsh, jumping the pools and plunging through water with a noise like the sound of a railway train, till they are lost in the distance. These lechwe on Bangweolo are exceedingly numerous and exist in thousands. Generally, when feeding quietly and undisturbed, the herds of bulls feed apart from the cows and calves, but each herd keeps under the leadership of one old bull.

The black lechwe differ very considerably from the red variety, such as is found upon the banks of the Luapula River, in that there is always a large quantity of black hair growing upon the flanks and intermingling with the red hair on the back. Some of the older bulls are almost as black as the male sable antelope, and are exceedingly handsome animals. There are few more attractive sights to a man interested in natural history, than one of these old bulls facing the point of danger, head thrown up, the vivid white of his chest and belly, and his shining black flanks merging into the dark red of his back. As he stands alert, sensing the extent of the danger, the herd behind him watch intently his every movement, trusting in the skill of their leader to take them into safety. Then, having made up his mind, he throws up his head with a snort of warning and away he goes for safety, followed by the herd, splashing over the squelching marsh.

The red variety has a much lighter coat, almost orange yellow in some specimens I have shot. It has been stated by some hunters that there is only one species of lechwe in North-East Rhodesia, namely the black. They say that even though the red variety show no black hair on the coat, yet some trace of black will be found about the legs of this buck. This view is entirely wrong; the two varieties are quite distinct, and though sometimes a red lechwe may show traces of black upon the lower part of the leg, this may be due to an occasional cross-breeding. I have shot several red lechwe full-grown males on the banks of the Luapula River which show no trace of black at all, even on their fetlock joints. Another very distinctive difference between these two varieties of lechwe is in their heads and horns. In comparing the cleaned skulls, with horns attached, of these animals side by side, there is no difficulty in determining which is the skull and horns of the red lechwe and which of the black. The skull of the latter is wider and more slender and the horns are more perfectly lyre-shaped, with the points well forward. The shape of the horns, also, is distinctly oval rather than round. The skull of the red variety is larger and broader, due, no doubt, to the larger and heavier horns which the red variety carries. These horns have a much wider spread, are more deeply ridged and are

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rounder in circumference. The base of the horns in an old red bull is very much greater than in a similarly old bull of the black variety, and the points of the horns tend to turn outwards rather than forwards in the marked way shown in the latter.

The sportsman who wishes to secure some good heads must be in very good physical condition, and prepared for some exceedingly hard work. The walking over wet ground, possibly under a blazing sun, and where there is no cover, requires an expenditure of an enormous amount of patience and physical energy such as is required by no other form of shooting. These buck trust in the natural security given to them by the marsh and stretches of water, and therefore do not take the trouble to conceal themselves, but are visible practically at all hours of the day moving about and feeding in large herds over the wide expanses. Thus, though there is no difficulty for the sportsman to see the buck, it is quite another matter when the question arises of the near approach to ensure his getting a successful shot at a bull carrying a good pair of horns; for he can be sure that as soon as ever he begins to approach a herd every one of his movements is being carefully observed by the buck, even though they do not at once commence to move off. Distance upon these flats is very deceiving,

for what may seem, even to an experienced shot, on first approaching the buck, to be quite an easy space of ground to cover, may prove to be much further than he anticipated by the time he has traversed part of it. On a flat of this kind, where there is nothing to break the evenness of the green grass, perspectives are difficult to judge. On first approaching a herd fatigue is not felt, as the sense of excitement carries the sportsman on, and such little discomforts as tumbling into a hole full of warm wet mud and water, or falling down flat, tripped by some trailing grass, are scarcely noticed; it is only when he has approached the watchful herd, has steadied himself for a shot at what he thinks a sure distance, and having missed through a shaky hand, has had the mortification of seeing the herd go charging away for possibly a quarter of a mile, that he realizes the difficulties and discomforts which must be gone through before he can obtain the trophies he is out for. Having set his heart upon depriving the leader of his life, with the hope of seeing its head with its fine spread of horns set up in his home, he takes fresh breath, and, not without some mental swear words, goes toiling after the herd once more. As he plunges into water holes, gets bitten by the big marsh mosquitos, and oftentimes has to pick off leeches from his knees, he may make a vow that, once he has managed to

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shoot the leader, he will leave such sport alone in the future.

It is never very easy to get a close shot at lechwe unless in the very early morning when they are feeding scattered; then one may sometimes mark down a fine bull feeding by itself, and by careful crawling and taking such cover as is available in the marshy grass, approach within a hundred yards. Even then it is possible to miss the animal. This I think is due to the fact that as these animals are standing often leg deep in grass, one is apt to fire over their backs.

The first experience I had of lechwe shooting was upon these flats of Lake Bangweolo. After an early breakfast at sunrise I went out, from the small village where I was camping, under the guidance of the headman, some two miles from the village. There I saw, in the distance, some large brown patches upon the marsh, which my guide pointed out to me as being herds of lechwe feeding. On examining them through my field-glasses I made out one herd consisting of about thirty bulls, and this herd I determined to approach. After covering about 400 yards of marsh, and incidentally being covered myself with mud, I approached near enough to get a shot at one of the bulls with my .303 rifle, this being at about 150 yards. I heard the bullet strike—always an unmistakable sound—but I could

not see the result as the rest of the bulls went charging off. On getting to the place where he had been standing I found him lying stone-dead, the shot having luckily hit him behind his shoulder. The horns of this animal, measured later, were 21 inches. Encouraged by my success I determined to try to get some more and took up the chase. Luckily the herd did not go very far, but joined on with the cows and calves and stood facing me some 300 yards away. They allowed me to approach to within half that distance and, as they were commencing to get restless, I took the opportunity of firing at the bull nearest me, which, however, was by no means the best in the herd. A shot fired from the same rifle hit him on the foreleg below the shoulder, smashing the leg, so that he did not go far and I was able to finish him off with the second shot. This bull's horns only measured 20 inches. The herd again rushed away and commenced to break up. The cows and calves with the majority of the young bulls went off in one direction, while five old bulls separated themselves from the herd and went off together. Amongst these latter was a big black bull I had marked down as having the best head. I followed this group for some time, and, finding I could not come up to them, I sat down and rested, watching them till they stopped a quarter of a mile away. As soon as they stopped I

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began quietly following by myself, with one man carrying my ·450 preceding me to pick out the easiest way over the marsh, leaving the rest of my natives far behind cutting up the two lechwe I had previously shot.

By taking advantage of patches of long grass and some groups of the papyrus I shortened the distance sufficiently to get a good view of two of the bulls. They were then quietly walking off in line. I waited a few more minutes to steady my hand, and then taking a snap shot, was lucky enough to hit the last bull, which promptly fell, the others immediately galloping off. On getting up to him I found the .450 bullet had hit him high up above his right hip bone and had broken his back; he was dragging himself along the marsh on his forelegs, so I soon put him out of his misery. This was a fine black bull which had recently come through an encounter with either a crocodile or leopard. His face had several festering wounds, probably caused by crocodile teeth, and a large part of the upper lip had been torn off. His horns, subsequently measured, were 24 inches, and proved to be the best head I had got.

By this time I was getting pretty tired of tramping about, the sun by then being well up, but as I had a large caravan of native porters to feed I determined to try to get some more lechwe, so after resting I moved off to where I had seen another

large herd feeding in the distance about half a mile away. I was lucky enough to get two bulls carrying horns of 221 and 23 inches respectively, also three cows, which gave a morning's bag of eight animals. I heard afterwards that the villagers had picked up two other bulls out of this last herd which had been wounded by shots I had intended for the other bulls. On this marsh, while following the herds of lechwe, I noticed numbers of small lemon-coloured frogs in the pools, which I have seen nowhere else. Bird-life was also plentiful here, large flocks of duck and spur-winged goose constantly flying up from the pools, disturbed by my firing. I also flushed several specimens of the beautiful large painted snipe which looks and flies so much like a woodcock.

The red lechwe is found, as I have said, upon the banks of the Luapula River, also upon the Chambezi River which flows into Lake Bangweolo. Owing to the persistent attentions of the natives, who net and spear them on the marshy banks of the Luapula River, the numbers are much diminished, but they are still fairly plentiful upon the marshy ground close to the Mberezi River near its mouth, which opens into a marsh on the southern part of Lake Mweru. If anything, the character of this marsh makes it more dangerous to shoot over than the marshes I have described on Lake Bangweolo.

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The ground is softer and more treacherous, and contains numerous water-holes and sluggish streams through which one has to plunge and wallow. But here one has the best chance of getting some good heads for trophies, and from the herds in this locality I have obtained a considerable number of good heads carrying fine horns.

The best head, however, I ever shot of the red variety was a solitary bull on the banks of the Luapula River. This was in the month of November, 1909. I was then engaged in examining the lower part of this river for the presence of the Glossina Palpalis Fly which carries the parasite of sleeping sickness. This work necessitated the careful examination of the banks and bushes growing by the river by means of a boat. The only boats available were two native canoes made out of a single tree trunk Each day I examined the bushes, noting the places where the flies were, and sleeping at night upon the open bank, some little distance away from the water, under a tent-fly, as the canoes were so small that only the barest necessaries could be carried. At night the winds used to sweep through this cover, nearly blowing me out of my bed; but my little camps were never disturbed by wild animals. It was very interesting at sundown to see enormous flocks of duck which used to leave the river and sweep up close to my tent, dashing off

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whistling and calling to each other, to spend the night in the marshes beyond. I often regretted that my shot-gun, by an oversight, had gone on with the rest of my loads to wait for my return up the river sixty miles away. In this part of the river huge crocodiles used to flop off the bank at the approach of the canoes, and frequently I had to dodge families of hippopotami. These I carefully avoided shooting at or disturbing for fear of reprisals on their part, when they would have made short work of my canoes and my party. At night I could hear them grunting and snorting in the water close to my camp. Frequently, during the course of the day, I used to land, if the banks were favourable, to make myself a cup of tea and stretch my legs, and it was upon one of these occasions that I got my biggest red lechwe head.

I had just got out of my canoe about one o'clock to heat up some food for lunch and climbed the bank when I saw a large red lechwe bull standing some 60 yards away, looking at me with more curiosity than fear. I beckoned quietly to my solitary gun-carrier, who passed me my Mauser, which was always kept ready loaded for eventualities, and taking a careful shot at the chest of the buck—missed. The bull threw up his head but did not move, so I got another shot in quickly which I heard hit him. However, he jumped off and dis-



Koodoo Bull.

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LECHWE

appeared into some thick papyrus, leaving a fairly well marked blood trail. After a time the blood got less, and more difficult to pick up amongst the brown papyrus roots. Once or twice I heard him breaking away through the thick cover in front of me. I finally got up to him as he was making for some open ground which ran along by the side of the marsh, and as he started off got a third shot at him which bowled him over. I found that the shot which had crippled him had caught him on the edge of the shoulder, disabling his left foreleg. To go for miles upon three legs seems in no way to inconvenience African buck. The head of this lechwe carried a very fine pair of horns, $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. These are the biggest red lechwe horns I have ever seen in the country.

The feet of the lechwe show a curious adaptation for the marshy ground where they make their home. The halves of the hoof, which is a long one, split widely apart as they run, giving them a broader surface to support their weight upon soft ground into which they naturally tend to sink. The fetlock joint is also peculiar in that there is no hair between the hoof and the joint, but rough dark skin, resembling that found upon a duck's foot. The vitality of this buck when wounded is astonishing, and all men who have shot at or followed it agree that it takes more killing than any other buck.

Unless wounded vitally it will manage to make its escape in the marsh. Even when badly wounded, these buck will frequently get away, disappearing into high grass amongst which they will lie down. As there are no trees to climb it becomes impossible to see them or find them, once the trail is lost in the marshy ground.

Chapter XI

BUCK SHOOTING: WATER-BUCK

I MAY be wrong, but I have always looked upon the hunting and shooting of water-buck in thick woods, not only as a good test of a hunter's eyesight in picking out an animal whose coat lends itself so well to the dark shady bushes against which it is resting, but as an equally good test of his ability to take a quick and accurate rifle shot.

Usually what happens is that the first thing the sportsman sees when looking for water-buck among thick trees, or following them up by spoor, is a patch of white that the water-buck shows round his tail, as he dashes off through the trees.

Sometimes the hunter will get the best of it in finding a male water-buck feeding out upon an open plain in the early morning, or standing upon the banks of some stream before sundown, thus giving him an easy chance of adding a pair of horns to his collection of trophies.

Sometimes again, on quietly walking through the woods near a big river where water-buck are plentiful, the sportsman may come upon a solitary bull

drowsing under a tree, or by the side of an ant-hill. My best water-buck was obtained by chance one morning on making for camp close to the Chambezi River. I was approaching the village where my tent was pitched about twelve o'clock in the daytime, when through the trees I came upon a water-buck standing asleep close to a hill. At least, I judged he must have been asleep, for although I took no special precaution to move noiselessly through the wood, I did not disturb him, though he was not more than 40 yards away. A shot I fired from a ·303 service rifle dropped him dead where he stood. The horns of this animal measured 30 inches in length, and were the longest pair I had obtained in the country.

Luckily I was able to preserve the mask, which was subsequently mounted with the horns in London, and the complete head now hangs on the walls of the Authors' Club.

The water-buck found in North-East Rhodesia are the common Sing-Song and Crawshay's, and both varieties are very plentiful wherever there are thick shady woods close to a stream of water. The cows predominate largely in proportion to the number of bulls, the usual number being from seven cows to one bull.

There is always keen competition between the bulls for the possession of the females, and it is not unusual to shoot bulls that have had their horns

WATER-BUCK

broken in such fights. These damaged bulls, when conquered in the fight, will take to a solitary existence, presumably till they recover, not only from the wounds sustained on their body by the horns of the victor, but also perhaps from the deeper hurt their dignity has sustained. Near the termination of my residence in that territory, while travelling through the woodland, I came by chance upon a water-buck bull standing amongst some saplings in a shady spot. At first sight I took him for a sable bull as he was so black, and more especially because water-buck are very scarce in this particular locality, and I had never previously seen one. On knocking him over with my Winchester and going up to where he lay, I found he was an old water-buck bull that had been much damaged in a somewhat recent encounter such as I have mentioned above. His left horn had been broken off within three inches of the root, while upon his body and head were several wounds made by the horn of his adversary. These wounds were all in a state of suppuration. One can imagine the tremendous struggle that had taken place, finally resulting in the snapping off of the horns of the weaker animal by a supreme effort upon the part of the victor to disengage his horns from those of his opponent.

One such struggle was witnessed by an official

who was actually the cause of the fight. He had left camp to get some food for his carriers, having heard that water-buck were numerous in the vicinity. Late in the afternoon he came upon a herd consisting of two bulls and several cows feeding in the woodland. He fired at the bull nearest him and hit it in the shoulder. This bull immediately rushed at the other, and began to attack him furiously with his horns, evidently under the impression that the cause of its pain was some act of aggression upon the part of its companion. As they were fighting vigorously the official was able to shoot them both.

In a case of this kind, probably the first waterbuck was desirous of robbing the other of his harem and had been afraid to attack earlier, and the pain of the shot had been the incentive that provoked the battle.

As I have said, it is no easy matter at any time to see the outlines of a waterbuck standing amongst the thick woods and dense shade in which these animals love to rest during the heat of the day. The male water-buck takes excellent care of himself, and is generally found resting apart from the cows. When disturbed he will dash off through the trees to where his harem is lying at rest, and give the alarm, and lead them along with him. If the chase, however, is close

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pressed, he will dash off after a time, and leave his cows to look after themselves.

All water-buck have a very rank smell, and one is easily able, when the wind is favourable, to detect their presence in a wood. This smell also lingers upon the grass for a considerable time after the buck have left the place in which they have been lying.

Though there is never any difficulty in locating water-buck, it is frequently difficult to decide what part of the animal one sees when it is standing amongst thick bushes. It, may happen that a careful shot, fired at what is supposed to be the chest or flank of the animal, results in sending it off with a damaged leg or wounded hip, necessitating many hours spooring in the hot sun, and possibly a disappointment in not getting the animal at all.

It is still more mortifying to see an animal, perhaps a bull, carrying good horns, go tearing off through the woods, apparently unharmed by the bullet which the sportsman has fired after taking careful aim, and has decided in his own mind ought to be a fatal shot.

When the hunter gets up to the place where the water-buck stood, it is an humbling experience for him to have his gun-carrier put his finger into a well-drilled hole in a tree where the bullet has found a billet; this tree-trunk having been un-

noticed against the black coat of the water-buck, which had been standing behind it.

If the hunter is fond of exercise in the sun he can follow a herd of water-buck until he tires them to a standstill. When this happens they will stand about amongst the trees in a helpless sort of way, enabling the hunter to pick and shoot whichever he chooses. Except in the Luangwa Valley, the water-buck in North-East Rhodesia do not carry long horns, and I should think a good average is about 26 inches. Out of many that I have shot the horns have been generally very disappointing as far as size went.

Of course, there is a great element of luck in being able to find a water-buck with good horns, but if he has a fair chance no sportsman can attribute his failure to shoot such an animal to anything but bad shooting.

I, myself, have had a good deal of bad luck in not getting anything very good in the way of heads, but I can also blame myself for having lost my chance through bad shooting on several occasions where I ought to have had such trophies.

One day of bad luck was November 5, 1908, when I shot three bull water-buck on the plain, one after the other, and not one of them had a head worth keeping. A friend who was travelling with me on his way up to the Congo border, from which

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we were not far away, only shot one bull, and that a very good one.

On another occasion I was travelling through a wood near the Abercorn road, when a short distance away, among some bushes, I saw a water-buck carrying what seemed to me a very fine head. He stood quite still not more than 40 yards off, and I had an excellent chance of shooting him. Instead of doing so, however, I succeeded in seriously damaging a young tree which was in a line with the bullet, and the water-buck went off, nor did I see him again, the ground being too hard for spoor. This then was an occasion when I was obliged to blame not bad luck, but bad shooting.

When the sportsman is shooting water-buck in thick cover or shady woods I advise that the rifle he uses should have a conspicuous foresight. For this reason I generally prefer to use a Mauser, which has a conspicuous head for its foresight. The foresight upon the ordinary service ·303 is not usually seen when aligned against such a dark object as a water-buck is when standing in the shade.

Chapter XII

BUCK SHOOTING: SITATUNGA AND TSESSBE

In some of the marshes, especially those having plenty of such permanent cover as is given by long grass or papyrus, and where there are deep pools, the Sitatunga buck is found. Owing to the dangerous character of their habitat, the ground being frequently impossible to walk over, these buck are neither easy to see nor to shoot. When they do leave the marsh, they come out on to the higher ground to feed, but this is only during the night, or in the grey morning before the sun is up.

At the first sign of the sun they return to the water, where they will pass the hot hours of the day, or else lie out amongst some thick grass where they are completely hidden. They are so shy that in some of the bigger marshes where they find sufficient food without venturing out, they may never be seen at all, except possibly occasionally by natives going through the waterways in their dug-out canoes after fish, eggs or wild fowl.

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When such a locality is visited by the sportsman, it is a matter of chance whether he gets a bull or not, as these keep themselves so well-hidden amongst the high grass, and when disturbed have a habit of plunging into the deep pools, where they lie submerged amongst the weeds, with only their noses above the water.

Walking through one of these marshes is not only unpleasant but dangerous. The footholds are precarious, and the sportsman can never tell from one moment to another whether he will not be plunged into some deep, muddy hole, or over head and ears in a water pool, owing to the ground giving way under his feet.

Luckily not all the marshes where the sitatunga live are of this character, some of them being narrow and merely the overflow of some sluggish stream. As the water recedes during the dry weather, a large part of this marsh dries up, and it is possible to burn much of the grass, destroying the cover where the sitatunga hide.

The sportsman now is able to walk over a large part of this ground, and may be able to get a shot at one of the bulls, which will be found either close up to or actually in the stream of water, as they naturally tend to collect themselves where there is the greatest cover.

At this period of the year the sitatunga leave

the marshes towards the higher ground for the sake of the fresh grass which grows after a fire; and there may be no difficulty in getting a shot at a bull standing well in the open, provided that the sportsman takes up a position well under cover, commanding one of the banks visited by the buck to feed. He can always tell which is one by seeing the fresh spoor.

To make sure of getting a shot he must be on the ground almost before dawn. At this time of the year, just at sundown, the sitatunga will feed upon the same banks, so that, should he not be up early enough in the morning, the sportsman may have an equally good chance of getting a sight and possible shot at one of these bulls before darkness comes on. However, I should advise him to be on the spot early. Then, should he wound one of these animals, he has the daylight before him to enable him to follow up the blood trail.

Many of these buck are killed every year in the dry season by natives, who stretch nets across the marsh, and, walking through the marsh, drive the buck into the nets, where they are killed with spears by the men waiting behind in hiding.

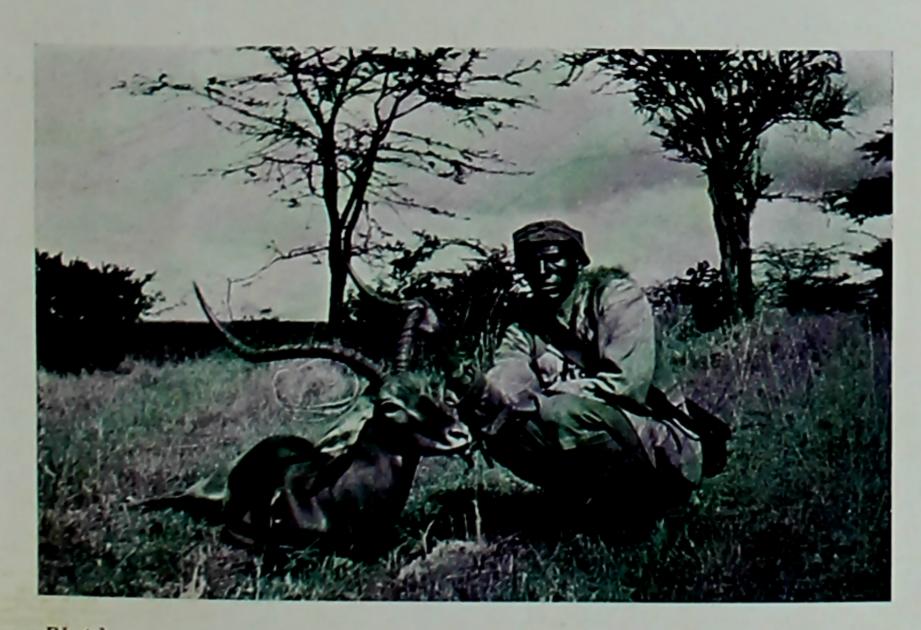
One can scarcely stop the natives from using these means of hunting this buck, but it is a pity, for they are not common, and a great many cows and calves fall victims in these hunts.



Photo]

Tessebe Antelope.

[F. H. Melland.



Photo]

Mpalla Buck.

[Hon. Susan Hicks Beach.

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SITATUNGA AND TSESSBE

When it is not possible for the sportsman to get a sitatunga bull in any other way, driving is resorted to. The sportsman is stationed on some high ground commanding a portion of the marsh, down wind. A large number of the natives, armed with sticks, then spread themselves across the marsh, up wind, and beat the tall grass, at the same time making as much noise as they can by calling and shouting, with the result that any sitatunga which may be in the marsh are driven down towards the lower end where the sportsman is waiting.

Every now and again a native, who has been picking his way carefully over the rotten ground, will suddenly disappear from sight into a mud hole, and have to be rescued by his companions, these beaters never being far apart from each other.

While this is going on expectation is at its height in the sportsman's breast, as he sits eagerly watching the operations with his rifle held ready to fire. Sometimes it happens that when a sitatunga bull rushes out of the grass the expectant sportsman to his bitter disappointment misses it.

Sometimes again the bulls may not come out at all, but take to the deep pools in the middle of the marsh, and refuse to be driven out. At other times they may break away to right and left

instead of coming forward across the open space.

I recommend that a heavy rifle should be used at these buck, for if not sufficiently disabled, they will plunge into the marsh and be lost, either sinking themselves in some pool or hiding in thick growths such as papyrus, where it is possible even to lose the blood spoor. On several occasions I have asked natives why it is that these buck living in marshes or deep pools do not get eaten by crocodiles, and they have invariably answered that the crocodile and the sitatunga have signed a treaty of friendship. As a matter of fact, in most of the marshes inhabited by these buck, there are no crocodiles. Some of the best districts for these buck are Mpika, Luwingu, on Lake Bangweolo, the Chambezi River, and in the neighbourhood of Kasama.

As far as I know, Mr. Timmler, formerly of Fort Jameson, holds the record for the greatest number of bulls shot in one day, he having got six good ones in a papyrus swamp not far from Abercorn, walking them up himself. The nature of this marsh being known, his record will be hard to beat, for there are few sportsmen who care to risk a similar undertaking.

It would be hard to find a greater divergence than there is between the nature and character of the plains where the tsessbe antelope is found and

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those of the wet and muddy plains which I have just described as being the home of the sitatunga, yet the work entailed by the sportsman, if he wants to obtain a good bull tsessbe antelope, is just as great in another way.

For not only is this a very speedy but a very wide-awake antelope, and the watchfulness of the bulls makes it very hard for the sportsman to get within easy shooting range of the herds. The plains are flat, with but little cover in the shape of grass, and the attempts to get near enough for an effective shot are often exceedingly tedious. The bulls seem to think that 500 yards is quite close enough to allow a human being to approach.

At this distance it is not very easy to plant the bullet in the vital spot of a buck standing amongst the grass. I am afraid it frequently happens that a sportsman gets tired of the chase after he has been toiling about over these plains trying to get the chance of shooting a good bull, and may be tempted to fire a few pot shots into the herd on the chance of hitting one of the animals.

Possibly the best procedure to get a shot at a bull is to attempt to drive the herd. This is easy if there are two or three sportsmen amongst the party who arrange amongst themselves who shall do the walking and who shall do the waiting. When a good bull is sighted through the field-glasses,

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or a herd containing two or three good bulls, those who have decided to do the waiting make a very long detour and take up their position at some point well down wind, where a patch of high grass will give them cover. The sportsman who is doing the walking, having allowed sufficient time to elapse for his friend or friends to take up their position, slowly moves towards the herd who are standing watching his every movement. While doing this, he may get the chance of a shot himself if the buck break back away to the right or left, or if they wait for him to get within a reasonable distance so that he can fire a shot at a selected bull. If they follow their usual habit, however, of tearing off in front of him as he approaches, he will try to manœuvre to bring them to where the other gun is waiting. As the bulls lead the herd the man who is waiting concealed may get an excellent chance of dropping one or two of the bulls before the herd retreat in disorder. As they rush away the sportsman who is walking may get the chance of one or two shots.

The tsessbe is found nowhere else but on the flats near Lake Bangweolo, the herds running up to 400 in number. On the lower reaches of the Lumbatawa River these buck are more approachable and less wild than on the other flats, and I should advise a man who wishes to add the horns

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of this animal to his trophies, to proceed to this part of the Chambezi flats.

Both the cows and bulls carry horns like the other members of the hartebeeste family. The average length of the horns carried by the bulls is from 15 inches to 16 inches in length. The record horns for 1909 were those shot by Mr. Creed, measuring 17\frac{3}{4} inches; Mr. F. H. Melland's pair for the same year measuring 16\frac{7}{8} inches. This latter gentleman, who was Assistant Magistrate at Mpita for so many years, has probably shot more tsessbe than any other person.

Chapter XIII

BUCK SHOOTING: A DAY ON THE PLAINS

THROUGHOUT the territory there are numerous open spaces like meadows, some of them quite flat, others irregular in shape and formation, with patches of trees, and here and there large ant-hills, some of which have bushes or trees on top.

These plains or open spaces are called in the native language "Dambo" or "Nyika." Generally the larger plains have a stream flowing through some part of them. Others again have marshy or wet parts which may dry up in the winter. The grass on these plains during the rains is thick and becomes long and sour; and at this period no buck are ever seen upon them, as the coarse grass gives them no attraction in the way of food.

During the cold dry months of May to August, the north-east trade winds, combined with the hot sun, dry the ground and the sap from the grass, so that this grass becomes yellow and brown. Towards August the whole of the country becomes the scene of numerous bush fires, and all day long great clouds of smoke go drifting across the woodland, which at

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night shows the red glow and sparks of the rushing flames. These fires sweep over the country, burning up all the dried grass and dead branch, sometimes licking up old dead trees, which may go on smouldering for many days after the fire has passed. Were it not for these bush fires Central Africa would be untenable; for not only do they burn up and clean the vegetation, but they destroy the innumerable insects such as ticks, flies and spiders, as well as snakes and other things, which swarm in the bush.

After the fires have passed, the country is left clean but black. This period of ash lasts but a short time, the winds sweeping away and scattering it. From the cloudless skies heavy dews fall at night, and within a few days the grass roots put forth new blades. At the end of a week, or a couple of weeks at the most, the plains are green, and all the buck and zebra come out to feed upon the fresh green grass. This is the best time for the hunter to visit the country for big game shooting. camps are pitched close to some stream within the proximity of one of these larger plains. In the early morning, before the sun is up, the hunter ought to have a light repast and be on his way so that at break of day, when the sun is just topping the horizon, he may be ready to start operations upon any buck which may be feeding.

The usual procedure is to skirt one of these plains

with two gun-bearers, the sportsman carrying field-glasses. Walking quietly through the bush which edges the plain, opportunity is taken to climb some ant-hill, or from behind the cover of a tree to scan the plain for the feeding buck. Though many buck may be visible, it is not always easy with the naked eye, especially if there is mist about, to distinguish a buck carrying good horns. Of course, where meat to feed the carriers is the chief desideratum, the question of horns is of minor importance, and a female animal is of as much value as a bull.

Granted that the carriers are well fed and that the sportsman is out for good heads to take home as trophies, field-glasses are essential. early morning visit to one of these plains at this time of the year is always most interesting. The absence of tall grass allows even small animals to be seen. Frequently a fox will be detected slinking along the plain on the hunt for a stray rabbit or rat. On one occasion I watched four hunting dogs busily engaged in trying to locate fresh spoor of some buck that they could follow. These dogs always hunt in packs, and when they are numerous soon clear the game away from a district. They hunt by scent till they get within sight of the buck, when they run it down, making running leaps at its flanks and neck till the prey is so weakened by loss

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of blood, or bewildered by constant attacks, that at last it is easily pulled down.

It is generally the youngest dogs which do the running down, the older animals acting as guides and instructors in picking up the scent. When a pack is hunting a piece of woodland they spread through it much as foxhounds do when drawing a cover in England, the females and untrained and young dogs beating through the bush till they strike the fresh scent of a buck, when they give tongue. The old dogs keep on the outside, so that when the buck breaks out they can immediately attack it or turn it in front of the rest of the pack. Once these dogs are upon the trail of a buck they never abandon the chase, unless beaten by such an event as the buck taking to deep water.

Mr. Sheffield-Neave watched some dogs hunting buck upon the banks of the Chambezi River, and saw them drive a water-buck out of the wood. This water-buck, to escape them, sprang into the river where it was at once pulled down by a crocodile. The dogs immediately returned to the wood to find fresh prey.

A few years back a large pack drove an exhausted kudu bull right into the township of Broken Hill, where it was shot and the dogs driven off. It was covered with bites and could not have gone much further.

Domestic dogs, when they meet these wild dogs, immediately recognize them as friends and start rubbing noses with them. In some parts of the country the natives tie up their female dogs so that the breed may be improved. The hunting dog is a courageous animal and shows but little fear of human beings. A friend of mine going along through the bush came upon one of them as he was following a game track. He stopped to watch it and the dog sat down and commenced to bark at him. As he approached the animal moved off, stopping when he did and again barking at every stop. As it would not go away in spite of sticks and stones being thrown at it, my friend got tired of the noise it was making, and fearing it would alarm the game feeding on the plain, which are very shy of these dogs, he shot it.

I once got into the middle of a pack of these dogs hunting, and was much tempted to shoot some of them, but my gun-carrier warned me that if I did so the rest would come to attack us. Whether they would or not I do not know. I have heard a European say that when out after water-buck one day he was treed by a pack that were out after the same buck, but I cannot vouch for the truth of this story.

To return to the sportsman going round the plain. Usually the first thing that he sights is a



Blue Wildebeeste.

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herd of zebra, and unless he takes great care to avoid alarming them they will inevitably spoil his morning's sport as they act the part of watch-dogs. Very often feeding with them will be a herd of roan or hartebeeste, and when he has located a bull carrying a good head of horns, the sportsman's object will be to try to get within shooting distance without alarming the zebra, which in their flight would immediately take off every buck on the plain.

On some of the plains which are inclined to be marshy during the rainy season, there are great numbers of a small grey ant-hill, averaging about 3 feet high. The plains also grow a stiff, reed-like grass which does not always burn well, often leaving patches. It is on this kind of plain that the reed-buck likes to make its home. In the early morning, or late afternoon, these buck may be seen, often in considerable numbers, but always in pairs, the pairs occasionally accompanied by a young one. Some of the old bulls have very large horns relative to their size, though not always very long. The older bulls' horns are very strong and well developed, but not long. Usually the sportsman shoots a great number of these buck before he is able to obtain horns worth keeping as trophies. It was only after shooting many dozens during a period of at least two years that I eventually got a very fine pair, though I had kept several of the

others as trophies previously. This was a bull, shot upon a small plain such as above described, which, as far as I know, had not been shot over previously by any other sportsman. It dropped stone-dead to a shot through its heart from my ·303 rifle. It was only when examining him that I was delighted to find that his horns were exceptional, proving when subsequently measured to be nearly 17 inches in length. As a rule, a good average pair of horns in this country, especially on the higher parts of it, measures about 13 inches.

On similar plains the wart-hog, driven by hunger from his usual feeding-places in the woods or hills, will sometimes venture in the early morning. This animal is very fond of overturning some of the smaller ant-hills to lick up the numerous ants which he finds at their base. To do this he uses his long tusks as levers, frequently succeeding in chipping or breaking them in the operation. He never seems quite happy when out on one of these open plains, probably knowing that he will fall an easy prey to a lion if one should be about and see him. From the numbers of skulls of the wart-hog I have found lying about on these plains, I should say his fears of such a fate were well grounded. One morning, on visiting the plain on the look-out for sable or eland, which I knew were fairly plentiful, just as I got to the edge of the plain I saw a

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lot of zebra feeding some three hundred yards away from where I was. I immediately used my glasses to see whether there were any buck amongst them, and I saw a large wart-hog boar rooting about amongst the zebra. Every now and again some zebra foals would make playful runs at him, when he would retreat and start operations upon another small ant-hill. He was never allowed to remain at rest for long, but was chased away by the young zebra till he finally gave up ant hunting in disgust and trotted off up the hill to the woodland beyond.

As a rule only the sable and roan antelopes are seen feeding on the open spaces which are found on the higher ground. A herd of sable feeding close to the edge of the wood, with a fine old bull with a glossy black coat keeping watch, is a very beautiful sight. The cows, with their sorrel red coats and the tiny little yellow calves at foot, make a pretty picture, and both the male and female are amongst the most graceful of buck, having such handsome bodies and slender legs. When the sportsman fires at the old bull, if the bullet, hitting the ground in his vicinity, shall not lay him low, he will not rush away, but will stand trying to find out whence the danger comes, keeping guard while the cows and calves make for the woodland. Frequently he will lower his head and paw at the

ground, just as if he would invite his assailant out into the open to fight him on even terms; and when he drops dead to a better placed bullet, the sportsman, looking at the handsome dead body with the noble curving horns must feel a certain amount of regret that the essence of big game shooting should entail the destruction of such buck.

On one occasion while I was trying to get a shot at some sable feeding on one of these plains, they were constantly moving off from one part to the other, in a restless way, finally disappearing into some woodland on the far side. I took up their spoor from the place at which they had disappeared and found that a male lion was also upon a hunting expedition, just as I was, and that they had evidently seen him; hence their restlessness. Two of my gun-carriers got a glimpse of the lion ahead of us and tried to point him out to me amongst some bush, but I could not see him at all, though he could not have been more than a hundred yards away. I followed up the trail and managed to shoot the big black bull, but to my great regret saw nothing of the lion.

These plains are frequently bordered by Masuko plum trees, and when the fruit is ripe the sportsman may come upon, or rather, I should say, see a herd of baboons making off in front of him. These animals keep such excellent watch that they never

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allow themselves to be taken by surprise. Usually they live upon the hills and amongst the rocks, but during the hungry months of the winter will come down after this fruit, or to visit the mealie patches in the native gardens. Most sportsmen in the course of going through the bush after game have been annoyed by the presence of the honey-bird. This little bird has an insatiable desire to eat honey, and to obtain it will call upon any human beings to follow it to where there is a hive in a tree or an old ant-hill. This procedure upon the part of the honey-bird is very nice when one wants honey, but the constant chattering it makes as it flits from tree to tree, calling upon the hunter and his natives to follow it, is quite another thing when that hunter is after game. The twittering noise is so loud and incessant that it inevitably frightens away game, which seem to realize that the honey-bird only makes it when human beings are in the vicinity. I remember one afternoon, when I was many miles away from camp, I was trying hard to come up to a herd of hartebeeste which I had been chasing through a wood for the best part of two hours. They would not stand still to give me a shot, but as soon as I saw a glimpse of a yellow skin amongst the bushes ahead, they would immediately start again into flight; and no wonder, for a confounded little honey-bird would not leave me for a moment, but

kept up an incessant chattering, so anxious was it that I should visit some store of honey it had found in the wood. I finally got rid of it by detaching some of my native carriers who had followed me to carry any meat that might fall to my gun; these I sent off under the guidance of the honey-bird while I sat down and waited till it and they had gone into the woodland. Then I got up to my hartebeeste and shot two.

Chapter XIV

BUCK SHOOTING: BUSH-BUCK, DUIKER, AND DIK-DIK

In some parts of the country, especially towards the west on Luapula or towards Lake Mweru, when the sportsman encamps near native villages, he will frequently be greeted with a barking call as he walks through the bush in the early morning. If he stops and looks carefully towards the place whence the barking has come, he will see a handsome little buck with reddish coat covered with white spots, standing facing him quite a short distance away.

This courageous little buck is the male of the bushbuck, and is very partial to feeding in the garden close to the villages. Sometimes he may be accompanied by his wife, but often enough he is solitary.

It is not very safe to approach it too near when wounded, as it has a very strong neck and very sharp horns. I once saw it stated that this buck had caused numerous deaths of men, who had approached it carefully when lying wounded, but I have never heard of such accidents myself.

During the day these bush-buck lie up in thick cover; they come out in the early morning, or may be seen in the afternoon after four o'clock, quietly walking about feeding on weeds and on the fruit of that poisonous tomato known as "Sodom's Apple," which is so common in deserted native gardens.

It is not a shy buck. I frequently got within thirty yards of them when they were feeding, and even when they have observed me they have often shown more curiosity than fear; even after I have fired a shot at them and missed, they have continued to stand.

The natives say that a leopard hesitates to attack a male buck; it is certainly true that leopards are often found making their homes in the same dense wood which shelters a family of bush-buck.

On the lower part of the Kalangwesi River, where there are some dense "Msito" growths, bush-buck are exceedingly plentiful, and some very fine heads have been shot here. Mrs. Lyons, the wife of the Magistrate who was stationed here for some years, can show a very fine selection of these heads; probably unequalled by any sportsman in the country.

The natives capture this buck by putting nets round the woods they are lying up in, and driving them into the nets, where they are speared.

My impression is that this pretty buck is getting

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scarcer each year, and that in future it may be necessary to protect it to some extent, as has been done in other parts of Africa. From its habits of feeding in the village gardens it is so easily seen that it falls a victim to the hunter more readily than any other species of buck.

A curious superstition is prevalent that eating the flesh of this buck will cause an outbreak of spots upon the skin of the person so doing. The native name for ringworm, which is not uncommon amongst natives, is the same as that of the bushbuck, viz., "Chisongo."

In the upper part of the shores of Lake Mweru, close to the Congo border, there are not only plenty of the ordinary bush-buck, but a very beautiful variety which I have seen in no other part of the country. For some years I was inclined to look upon this as either a variety of the marsh-buck or the harmless antelope; but, recently, on submitting the skins and horns to the Geological Society of London, a meeting of experts decided that it was a local form of bush-buck. It differs to a great extent from the ordinary bush-buck in the markings of the coat, having a very vivid white line running from the shoulder to the end of the ribs on each side, and having not less than seven transverse grey lines running down each flank. Its habits differ also from those of the ordinary bush-buck in that it in-

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habits a different, much more open, kind of country, and is gregarious. The head carried by the male is not only smaller, but the horns differ very greatly from those carried by the common bush-buck. The best specimen shot by me had horns of only 13 inches.

The largest herd I have seen feeding together consisted of seven animals, three bulls and four cows. One day while hunting in this part of the country I came upon this herd feeding in the open woodland about four o'clock in the afternoon. Two of the bulls were full-grown, the other was immature. I watched the herd for some time from behind a tree, being not more than 30 yards away from the nearest, and had no trouble in shooting the three bulls. Unfortunately one of the bulls was lost owing to the carelessness of one of my men who went up to cut its throat, as is the custom among Mohammedans. As he gripped it by the horns it threw back its head, inflicting a wound upon his arm, and when he at once let go, the buck managed to get to its feet and make off in the grass. I followed for some time, but the blood spoor was difficult to follow in the grass, and I soon lost all traces of it, and reluctantly had to abandon the chase.

In the same district I had a very unpleasant experience one day. I had shot one of these bulls,

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and sat down on a fallen tree to wait while my men skinned and cut it up. One of the natives came and asked me for my box of matches to make a fire to smoke out a hive of bees which he had located near where I was sitting quietly smoking. After driving away the bees he got out some fifteen pounds of beautiful honey, and as was the custom, offered me the lot upon a broad green leaf. I ate a small part of the comb, which had a somewhat disagreeable taste, being peppery and burning my throat. The rest of the honey was at once eaten by my native carriers.

A very short time after eating this honey I felt intensely sick, a sickness only comparable to that one experiences when crossing the Channel in a boat which does not know whether to cross it or remain on her side or keel. I felt green as well, and certainly looked it.

The effect upon the natives was extraordinary; they had finished the honey amongst them, and a short time afterwards they were rolling about the ground in all directions, extremely sick, and calling out that they were going to die from the pains in that part of the anatomy which the native loves to fill with food. I, myself, wanted badly to be sick, but couldn't. When we had somewhat recovered, we crawled home to the camp three miles off, and an exceedingly long three miles it seemed.

I take the greatest of credit in putting on record that, sick as I was, I managed to shoot two reedbuck which started up on the plain which we had to cross to get to camp.

The burning pain stayed with me for the whole of the day. I found from the natives that the bees must have drawn their honey from a species of Euphorbia, which is very common here. They also told me that the poison of this plant was well-known to them, and, previous to the occupation of the country by the white men, was much used by the Witch Doctors, for the detection of crime and theft. The method of procedure was for the Chief or Witch Doctor to give the suspected man a drink containing some of the juice of this plant. If he were sick, he threw it up and saved his life, and was therefore judged innocent; on the contrary, if he were not sick, he died, and was, of course, considered guilty to the day of his death.

The native name for this particular poisonous plant is "Kapunda."

While talking of the bush-buck, I may observe that another small antelope called the duiker is often seen in the woods, where it is exceedingly plentiful, though not always easy to shoot with a rifle. It is very watchful, and makes off at once at sight of danger, not stopping till it has put a safe distance between itself and the cause of its alarm.

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Though I have seen a great number of these buck while out shooting, I only succeeded in getting a few heads as trophies. One reason for this is that no sportsman ever thinks of going out to shoot the duiker, with the result that when they are seen the shot cannot be fired for fear of disturbing the other game which he may be after.

One is often tempted to fire at them for another reason: they have an annoying habit when frightened of jumping along through the bush and alarming other game worth following which may be in the vicinity. On one occasion I was following the spoor of two roan antelopes which I had wounded, and right in my track a duiker started up amongst some bushes, and stood not more than twenty yards away from where I was. The horn seemed longer than any I had shot up till then, and I could not resist the temptation of shooting this animal at the risk of the sound of the rifle frightening the roan I was following. I succeeded in shooting it dead, and succeeded at the same time in frightening the roan, and to my annoyance the duiker was possessed of one horn only, the other having broken off in a fight.

Possibly the best way to get a head of this animal for a trophy is to walk through the bush carrying a shot-gun loaded with S.S.G.

A larger number of these little buck are destroyed

every year by natives, who drive the woods when walking through them, calling out and beating the trees, thus frightening all the animals which may be lying in the undergrowth into the nets prepared for them.

Another small buck which may be seen in the woodland is the little dik-dik, about the size of a rabbit; it is very rarely shot, for when disturbed it will never stand in a position in which a rifle bullet can be fired at it, but dashes off at a great speed into the undergrowth, and is soon lost to sight. This is the smallest buck that exists in the territory.

There is one peculiar variety of this buck called the blue dik-dik; it is very common, close to the Kalangwesi River, where it may be often seen in the native garden when one is out after bush-buck.

Before I leave these smaller buck, I might mention that there is a species of the duiker known as the yellow back, which I have never succeeded in shooting. This variety is essentially a night feeder, living in the day in very thick undergrowths; the hoof marks are very unlike those made by the duiker, but resemble those made by goats. It is far from being a common species, and I have only seen its tracks upon the hills in the neighbourhood of the Ngola Stream, which runs into the Luapula River.

When shooting on the Chambezi Flats, after the

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bush fires have swept away the grass, numbers of the small black-backed duiker may be seen. As soon as they are approached, they make for cover, in which they will lie down. The best way then to ensure getting a bull is to walk up to the patch of grass where it has gone for shelter, and shoot it with a 12-bore loaded heavy shot as it jumps out.

Chapter XV

BUCK SHOOTING: THE SABLE

SURELY every one who has shot the sable antelope bull must think it the most handsome of all African buck. The coat of the old bull is a rich glossy black which gives the name to the animal. Not only when lying dead is it a beautiful creature, but its grace of carriage and beauty are more shown when a herd is discovered in a dimly lit glade, where the bull is keeping watch while the cows feed.

When one comes suddenly upon one of these splendid old bulls quietly feeding in some open space, or standing with his head well up, and the arched horns reaching the shoulders, he shows but little sign of fear as he quietly observes the intruder. Indeed, it is curious to see how little fear of man these bulls show in localities where they have not been hunted.

I had been some time in the country before I had an opportunity of coming across this antelope. There was a small herd which lived amongst the

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high hills close to the Congo Border on the east of Lake Mweru. I had heard from the natives that these buck were there, and was of course all eagerness to sight them and if possible kill the bull for his head and horns, but it was not on my first visit that I was to have any luck. I got to the village all right, a little village nestling in a dip in the hills, with the appropriate name of Chilindi, which means "The Water-hole."

I arrived here with my caravan after a fairly long and hot climb by hilly paths, and after pitching my tent—about half-past one—I, of course, had lunch. Then I was obliged to curb my eagerness until the sun had gone down a bit, for the sable antelope, like other African buck, do not commence to sally forth from the deep shade in which they have been passing the hot hours of the day, till about five o'clock in the afternoon.

Under the guidance of a villager who assured me there would be no trouble in finding the herd, I sallied out just before five o'clock to search the glades of the wood, which on these hills is of a very open character, the trees as a rule being scattered over the hill side, with little undergrowth.

Though we came upon plenty of spoor, not a single animal could I see, though I walked quite a long way through that beautiful woodland. This was very disappointing, but my disappointment

was doomed to be even deeper, for on retracing my way to the camp, near sunset, I saw in front of me, and certainly not more than forty or fifty yards away, a magnificent sable bull, quietly feeding. It was so occupied in its evening meal that it never even threw up its head to look for danger, yet there must have been at least fifteen natives trailing behind me, all of whom had come out with the expectation of seeing the white man do much execution with his rifle, and subsequently provide a glorious feast of meat, over which they would sit all night long. As I have hinted already, the day was to end in disappointment.

Between where I stood and the bull were three trees, which prevented me from getting aim at the neck or shoulders of the animal, leaving me only a small space of clear view of the animal's hind quarters. I was afraid to leave the shelter of the tree behind which I stood, in case, on seeing me, he should dash off, when I should get no shot.

Remember, this was my first sight of the sable, and I was tremendously keen upon getting that splendid head as a trophy. Well, here I was waiting for him to move from the shelter of the tree-trunk, and afraid to move myself. At the same time, the natives away behind were coming up to me, and they are usually such idiots on these occasions from their curiosity, wishing to see the whole

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details of the stalking and final slaying of the buck, that they frequently succeed in spoiling any chance of getting a shot.

I made the best, then, of the position I was in, and gave the buck a steady shot from my ·303 carbine, as near as I could judge to the kidneys. The shot took effect, and the bull, after giving a plunge forward, started off in full retreat, to my great chagrin, as I hoped to have seen him drop.

On getting up to the place where he had been standing, I found a few spots of blood, but not a great amount. This, however, is not uncommon in the case of the sable antelope, as their skins are so extraordinarily thick that even when badly wounded there is often but little blood found upon the trail, the bleeding going on internally.

We followed the trail of this buck until it got too dark to see; then I sadly wended my way home to camp.

I was unable to stay another day at this village, owing to my official work, so I put the natives on to the trail, promising them the large reward, or what to them was the large reward, of 2s. if they succeeded in bringing the head and horns to me at my next camp.

As there are many lions in this locality the possibility is that the sable was caught and devoured,

for the reward was never claimed, and thus what ought to have been my first trophy was lost.

There has been a suspicion in my mind ever since that these horns were a record pair, just as the salmon, which a fisherman loses off his hook, is always the biggest salmon on record.

My first sable to be shot was from this herd, however, a month later.

Some distance away from Chilindi was another village upon the same range of hills called Sangi. It was in the month of March, 1909, that I had gone to this village to examine the villagers in accordance with my routine of duty, investigating sleeping sickness. On the morning after my arrival I went out into the woods to try to get a buck to feed my men with. A quarter of a mile from the village, upon a hillside, was a large herd of sable antelope standing amongst the trees. The animals had seen us first, however, and were slowly making off. I got a shot at one before the herd disappeared over the crest of the hill, but could not see whether I had hit it or not. However, on taking up the trail from the place where the herd had disappeared, I found blood, and also knew from the marks in the soft ground that I had broken the hind leg of the animal, as the foot was being dragged.

I was able to come up to the wounded animal

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after half an hour of spooring. The distance this buck covered, wounded as it was, was really astonishing. I came upon it at last, standing amongst some bush, and dropped it with another shot from a ·450. The buck proved to be a young bull, with horns only measuring 36 inches in length. Still it was my first sable head and I was proud enough to have it, and I have it now mounted on a shield.

After leaving some men to cut up this animal I took up the broad trail left by the rest of the herd to try to get one of the big bulls. As I climbed some rocks and followed the trail over them towards the top of the mountain ridge, five or six animals suddenly dashed out of some bushes quite close to me. I hit one of the bulls as it passed me, which, however, had but little black on its coat. It was evidently wounded severely, as shown by the amount of blood left on its trail. I was never able to follow this trail, for the sky had gradually become more overcast—the month of March is one of sudden storms—and I and my men had just taken up a trail, when one of these storms burst upon us, with thunder and lightning, and we were bombarded with hailstones about an inch in circumference. There was no shelter as we were on the summit of the hill, and the swirling winds carried the hailstones into every nook and cranny. When

the storm was over we found all possible chance of following the trail gone, as the tracks made by the antelope had been quite wiped out. There was nothing left to do but to find our way back to camp, and for myself to get a change of warm clothing, which seemed the most desirable thing, and quite to outweigh in value the biggest sable horns that could be found.

It is only upon the heads of the old sable bulls that splendid curved horns are carried, sometimes reaching a length of 52 inches. I, myself, have never been able to shoot an animal carrying longer horns than 41 inches. Between the time I shot my first sable as above described and the last, I got a fair number of good bulls, but none of them were over the 41 inches. On the other hand there have been sportsmen who have shot very few sable antelope bulls, but who have had the luck to get excellent trophies. Some of these measured 45 inches to 47 inches.

The bull which carried the longest horns was shot by me not far from the Luapula River on the hills some twenty miles away from the town of King Kezembe. This is a splendid district for big game, and is noted for the size of its sable antelope.

The country on these hills is open woodland with large spaces of meadow or park land, with solitary trees growing here and there, or clumps of bushes.

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As the country is grass-grown, the general appearance is not unlike Richmond Park.

I pitched my camp one evening beside a very beautiful stream, which ran through woodland and meadow. The stream itself was much like a Scotch burn, with many clear pools in which lay big stones, while upon the open grassy banks were clusters of bushes resembling willows and alders.

On leaving my camp the following morning in the cold dawn—the time of the year being midwinter—I followed up this stream, keeping a careful look-out for buck feeding. Passing round the hend I came upon a small promontory of rocks, upon which I climbed, and obtained a commanding view of a large part of the open woodland as it sloped up the hills away from me. A couple of hundred yards in front of me and towards the left were three zebra busily feeding, with one solitary hartebeeste bull who was evidently associating with the zebra for companionship. Further away upon the right was a small herd of four roan antelope moving away from the water towards the trees. Under a tree beyond them a solitary eland bull was standing swishing its tail. As I was anxious to get a roan head carrying good horns, my first intention was to follow the roan, keeping under cover of the bushes beside the stream until I could get within range. This I proceeded to carry out, following the stream

for some distance till I thought I was near the position the roan had taken up when I saw them last.

On climbing up the bank I could not see the roan, but right in front of me was a black sable bull feeding close to a small wood. Naturally I immediately decided to let the roan go in peace. The only cover I had to enable me to approach the sable—which was some 300 yards away—was a patch of grass fifty yards in length and about two feet high. Through this I crawled to the edge nearest to the sable. On taking a shot with my .303 carbine I missed him clean, and heard the bullet strike the trees beyond him. As soon as I had fired, frightened by the noise of the bullet amongst the trees, it came running down towards where I lay, accompanied by another very large bull and two cows, which I had not seen, as they had been hidden in a deep hollow between myself and the wood, close to where I had first sighted the sable. They stopped suddenly fifty yards away from me, allowing me to get another shot at the first bull, and at the same time to fire a bullet into the other bull before they made off for the woodland. The rifle I used was my ·303 carbine, which had a tendency to shoot high. I followed the spoor from the place where I had seen them last before they disappeared in the trees, but found little blood, and that not easy to see

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as the soil was sandy, and the grass had recently been burnt off by a bush fire. One bull had gone off by itself and the other with the two cows. I followed up the latter bull first, and after some time spent in spooring, I came upon it lying down half hidden by some bushes which the fire had missed. Just beyond where it lay several zebra were standing, and I saw that they would give an alarm, as they were restless, evidently having seen us. However, it was too sick to rise, and I was able to finish it with another shot. This was the bull carrying the longest horns I had shot up till then, and I am sorry to say I was never able to shoot any animals with longer horns.

On taking up the spoor of the other bull I found it had lain down several times, evidently being badly wounded, but though I followed its spoor for many hours, I was not able to get a shot at it; on one occasion it started up from some thick bushes, not more than twenty yards away from me, but it did not give me an opportunity for a shot. I finally lost the spoor upon some hard dry ground covered with a short wiry grass which had escaped the fire, and which took no impression from the buck's feet.

My most handsome pair of horns I got one day by chance on the well-known Kapongola Hill near Kasame, in August last year. I was crossing these hills, walking at the head of my caravan, and

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following the native path which led over the range to the valleys on the other side where I was intending to pitch my camp for the night.

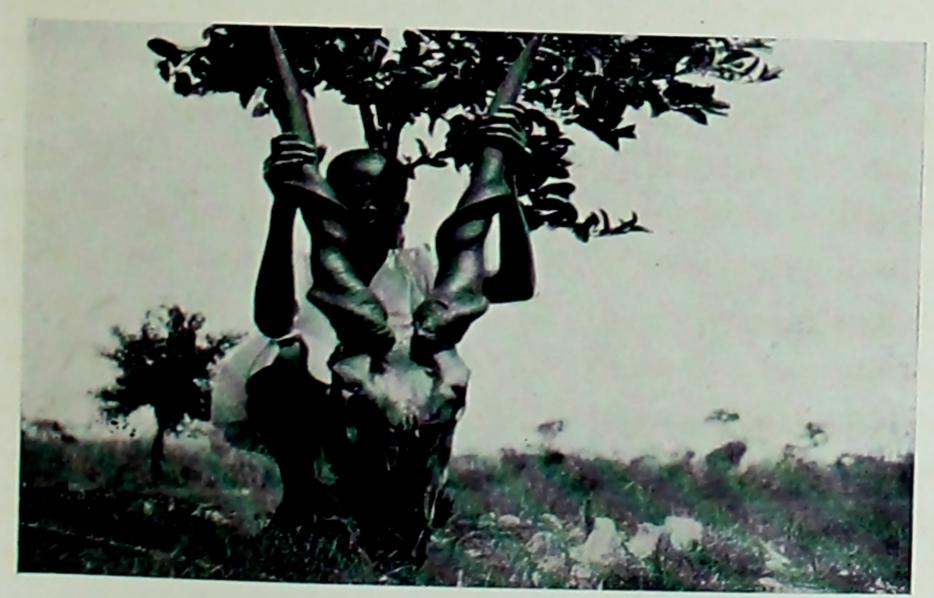
As I reached the side of the gulley down which the path wandered, I saw upon the other side, standing under the shade of the bushes, a black sable bull. I had heard about this bull on other occasions, both from the natives and from some Europeans who had sighted him, and also fired at him. He seemed to be asleep, for he took no notice of either my men or myself, although the distance was not more than 50 yards between us. I got a deliberate and easy shot into his shoulders from my 7.9 Mauser rifle. I heard the bullet hit, and the buck went charging up the side of the gulley, seeming to pay but little attention to his wound.

Following the spoor was a long and tedious business, owing to the ground being bare and covered with a loose shale in many parts. There was very little blood, and I and my two trackers followed the trail with the utmost difficulty. On several occasions we lost it completely, and only managed to re-pick it by making wide casts in various directions. Finally we were obliged to give the trail up late in the afternoon, as there were several miles to do before I could reach my camp.

Next morning I sent out my favourite gun-bearer, who is an exceedingly able tracker, along with a



A Good Sable Antelope Head.



Exceptionally Fine Bull Eland Horns.

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companion to help him, to the hill to try to pick up the trail where we had abandoned it the night before. I promised them both a money reward if they succeeded in bringing back the sable.

After I had seen them off I had a long morning myself in the woods trying to get a particularly large eland bull which was known to the villagers by sight for several years. However, my morning was unsuccessful, for though I saw its tracks, I never got a sight of it, and returned to camp at mid-day for lunch. This consumed, and while sitting smoking my pipe, I heard the natives singing the song they sing when they have been successful, and shortly afterwards, my two trackers came up to my tent, heading a small caravan of natives, carrying in the dismembered portions of the sable.

My trackers told me that they had found it lying dead amongst some thick bushes a very short distance away from where we had abandoned the trail the previous evening. The horns of this animal were very thick and well-ringed, but only measured 39 inches; being a good pair I preserved them, but unfortunately the mask was destroyed by boring beetles before I could get it home to London to be mounted.

My last two sable bulls were shot not far from the Luwena River on my way home to get to the railway in the Congo. This was in the month of

April, 1910. The hills here on the south of the river contained several herds of sable antelope, and the district is one which has not been shot much. One morning on my way from camp to the village in which I was next to sleep, I came across the spoor of a large eland bull close to the path. I followed this for a few hundred yards into the bush, when the eland, who must have seen or heard me, broke cover without giving me a chance of a shot.

After following it for quite a long way I came upon it standing amongst some trees a couple of hundred yards ahead. I could only see the tail half of its body, as the intervening trees covered its neck and shoulders. I was tired of chasing it, and so did not risk its starting off again by trying to get a shot at a more vital part of its body than that which presented itself. As a matter of fact a softnosed bullet fired from a rifle of heavy calibre into any part of a buck's body is usually sufficiently destructive soon to prove fatal. I gave this animal a shot from my Winchester ·500 as near as possible to the kidneys as I could judge.

It at once dropped to the shot, but soon got up and went on through the trees, leaving a very large blood spoor. I followed this for several miles through the wood and up the side of a hill. On the top of the hill I walked almost straight into a herd of sable antelope quietly feeding

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amongst some tall shady trees. The wounded eland bull must have walked through the herd.

At the risk of still further frightening the eland bull, I could not resist the temptation of taking a shot at the sable bull standing some 50 yards away. I heard the bullet strike, and the bull plunged forward, being joined by another bull, less dark in colour, which had been standing behind an ant-hill. They both came towards where I was standing concealed behind a bush, evidently unaware where the danger was. I got a shot at the second bull, aiming for his head. He did not drop either, but they both went charging away and were lost to sight, the rest of the herd making off down the hill. The bulls went off so fast that I thought I had missed them both, and I sat down and lighted a pipe, while I sent off one of my men on the track on the chance of there being some blood to show that they had been hit. While I was sitting smoking he brought back a few leaves on which there were blood spots, so I decided not to follow the spoor at once, but to let the animals stop, as they would soon do when they found they were not followed, and I occupied the time of waiting in eating the muchdesired lunch.

After lunch was over I took up the spoor; the wood here was very open, with but little undercover, so I had to move very carefully, keeping a

sharp look-out ahead so as to get a shot in before the animal saw me, as I was not at all anxious for another long chase.

On going round an ant-hill I saw one of the bulls standing among some trees 50 yards away, looking very sick. I took a shot at him with a .303, and he ran off and fell dead 100 yards away. As soon as I had fired, the second bull, which was the bigger, dashed out of some grass between myself and the first bull where he had been lying. He came charging back close to where I stood, enabling me to get a shot at him at close range, which finished him. On examining him where he lay dead I found that the shot I had fired first had passed through his upper jaw, just below the eyes. The length of his horns was 40 inches. The lesser bull, the one I had fired at first, was only three parts grown, and had horns 37 inches in length. The bullet from the Winchester rifle had passed through his stomach. Leaving the bulk of my natives to cut up these two bucks and transport the horns and meat to the village some seven miles away, I went on to follow up the eland spoor, which, luckily, led towards the village. I followed this spoor till dusk, but never saw him again, so I reluctantly gave up the chase, getting to my tent about half-past six.

The men bringing in the meat arrived an hour after me, and reported that four of their number

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carrying some of the dead meat were missing, having evidently lost their way in the bush. Next morning I waited till eleven o'clock on the chance of their coming in, at the same time sending out a search party. This country is full of man-eating lions, and I was afraid that some catastrophe might have happened. My hope, of course, was that they had found their way to some other village, and that they would rejoin me at the next camp.

I also sent out the villagers to take up the trail of the wounded eland bull, asking, if they came upon it lying dead, that they would send a runner after me with the head and horns. This runner never caught me, so presumably they either did not find the eland or were quite satisfied to eat the meat without further troubling about such an absurd request as mine.

After sundown the following day, to my great relief, the four men turned up with the meat, most of which I gave them for themselves. Their story was that they lost their bearings in the wood, and as night was upon them, they climbed trees with the meat, and tied themselves to the branches in case they fell off while sleeping. In the morning they left the trees, being both wet and cold from the rain that had fallen in the night, and although they had much meat, they were obliged to go hungry because there were no means of making a fire to cook it;

then they went wandering through the woodland to try to pick up some trail which would guide them to our village. While wandering thus they heard the sound of a native drum some distance away, and guided by the sound they reached this village, where the Chief gave them food and a guide, who led them across the twenty miles of country to the village where they thought my tent would be pitched.

If they were glad to get safely in, I was equally glad to see them turn up safe and sound, for a white man travelling in Central Africa is always in loco parentis to his black carriers.

Chapter XVI

ODDS AND ENDS OF SHOOTING

THERE is one animal in the bush that has no friends and therefore has to go about in herds of his kind. This animal is the bush-pig, which the sportsman may meet occasionally when he sallies forth in the early morning from his camp, if that be pitched somewhere in the neighbourhood of a native village. The villages especially favoured by the visits of these pigs are those where the cassava root is grown. The bush-pig is a very uninteresting animal, and when the sportsman cares to shoot one it can be only for food. These pigs, in common with their relations in other parts of the world, are foul feeders and are the scavengers of all the refuse there may be in the neighbourhood of the village. There is a curious superstition amongst the natives which forbids the women to eat the flesh of this animal—why, I am unable to say.

Lions are extremely fond of the flesh of this animal, and in the localities where bush-pig abound, lions also will be plentiful. When a lion sights a herd of bush-pigs he will spring in amongst them,

killing as many as he can with a blow of his paw. Although he is unable to eat more than part of one big pig, he may perhaps kill a number for a future meal. The sportsman travelling through the woodland in a district where lions and bush-pigs abound will find numerous skulls of the latter. Bush-pigs, being both savage and fearless when wounded, are apt to turn upon their aggressors.

When these bush-pigs get into a garden they will not stop at destroying what they can eat but will go rooting about in all directions, ruining what was a promising crop of cassava roots in a night. The natives, in order to avoid these depredations, are forced to dig deep intrenchments, similar to a moat, round their gardens. The earth which is dug from this forms a loose embankment on the inner edge. The pigs, if they should succeed in getting into this moat, are unable to climb the bank beyond. Another method the natives use for the protection of their gardens from these animals is to enclose the garden with a thick fence of thorn, leaving one or two open pathways. In the course of these pathways and close to the fence they dig a deep hole with perpendicular sides, while at the bottom they stick sharpened stakes of wood, so that any animal falling into this pit is impaled at the bottom. These pits are exceedingly dangerous because they are covered up with a layer of light sticks thrown across,

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with grass on these, and on the top of all a thin layer of sand or earth, to make the surface resemble the surrounding ground. This same method of trapping is also used for the capture of other animals, more especially the eland, roan, water-buck, or zebra. Many human lives have been lost owing to individuals falling into these pits and being staked.

Just before I left the country such an occurrence took place close to where I was staying, not far from Lake Bangweolo. A man strayed into one of these pits and was found subsequently by his friends lying dead a few yards away from the edge of the pit; he had managed to climb out in spite of a large wound through his lungs, from which he presently died from loss of blood. Some of the larger animals occasionally manage to escape from the pits. I shot a bull roan antelope near the Lukulu River one day which had deeply embedded in its breast five inches of the sharpened point of one of these stakes upon which it had fallen but managed to get free of. The wound had quite healed, and my men only came across the piece of wood when cutting up the carcase.

Sometimes in this country it may happen that the sportsman may have his camp close to a river in which there are crocodiles. It is always a pleasure to kill one of these loathsome reptiles

whose whole existence is passed lying in wait for and pulling in unfortunate buck which visit the river to drink. If, then, the sportsman should desire to rid the water of some of these creatures he will not only obtain good shooting—for it is by no means easy to find them out of the water, to offer a mark for his bullet—but he will get a feeling of satisfaction for each one he destroys. The best part of the body to fire at is behind the shoulder, though there is no difficulty in piercing the thick skin upon the back with a solid bullet, fired from an Express rifle.

An interesting fact regarding the reedbuck, which I do not think has ever been described by any sportsman or naturalist, is the curious noise they make when retreating. They have two ways of calling to each other when alarmed. When they are standing, having seen some object which has frightened them, they give a loud whistling call which carries a long way, and will not only call to attention every other reedbuck that may be within earshot and has been lying hidden in the grass, but will alarm every other species of buck or zebra feeding upon the plain. Often have I, in common no doubt with many other sportsmen, been endeavouring to get within shooting distance of one or other species of large buck feeding, unconscious of danger, on a plain, when some wretched reedbuck, which has been standing hidden amongst

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the tall grass unobserved by myself or my guncarriers, has suddenly darted out with its shrill whistle, scaring into flight the buck I had been carefully stalking. Several times I have taken vengeance upon the disturber of my sport, when, after frightening away the other animals, he stood some hundred yards away waiting to see what I was going to do next, and I have had much satisfaction in ending his curiosity by putting a shot into him. The other peculiarity which I regard as so interesting, and as peculiar to this particular buck, is the strange sound it emits as it runs away with a series of leaps through the grass. This sound is like a muffled whistle, and it was only after some considerable time of shooting in the country that I discovered how the sound was made. I was one day watching my natives skinning a bull reedbuck which I had shot, and as they came to the inside of the thighs of the animal they showed me a tiny hole or orifice inside the groin of each leg, close to the skin which covered the belly. This small aperture could just take in the tip of my little finger. I got one of the natives to enlarge this opening so that I could get my finger completely in, when I found that this hole led into a sack-shaped cavity about the size of a large hen's egg. It was quite smooth inside and lay close to the groin. I could then understand how the noise, which had puzzled me for so

long, was made by the animal when in flight. As the animal springs off through the grass I have noticed that it does so with the hind legs wide apart, and as it brings them together on landing this call or whistle is produced. Evidently the air, which has been sucked into the sack through the tiny aperture, is forcibly expelled as the buck brings its legs together again.

Chapter XVII

BIRD SHOOTING: GEESE, DUCKS, SNIPE, GUINEAFOWL, FRANCOLINS, PIGEONS

TENTRAL Africa is plentifully supplied with bird-life of many species, and the man who is fond of using the shot-gun can get his fill of shooting anywhere. In localities where there are marshes, such as Lake Bangweolo or the Chambezi Flats, the greatest variety of birds exists. To see them in their haunts the sportsman should take a native canoe and, sitting in the bow with his gun on his knee, allow himself to be paddled gently along the waterways of the marsh. If he be a naturalist and fond of observing the habits of birds he may be quite content not to use his gun, but find the charm and interest of watching them more than sufficient. The pools have floating upon the surface numerous lavender-coloured water-lilies, while that pretty and delicate flower, the name of which I do not know, but which is so like the English primrose in shape and colour, rears its head here and there amongst the growth of reeds and rushes. Upon the broad leaves of some water plant a species of

redshank with his preposterously long legs and wide-spread toes, runs lightly about, picking off grubs or some other insect. On the bushes, close to the water's edge, groups of the beautiful white egret sit preening themselves in the sun, while on an overhanging branch of the same bush a large spotted kingfisher awaits the chance of a passing small fish in the water below. Upon a withered branch of a high tree sits a white-headed fish eagle, while below him, on the bank, a heron stands poised upon one leg. As the canoe steals its way through the reeds there is a sudden splash in a pool of water beyond, and a flock of duck hurriedly jump from the water in alarm to the sound of frightened quackings. Another small pool may contain two of the pretty brown teal slowly swimming, their heads cocked from side to side as they wonder what has alarmed their larger cousins, the quacking duck. Where this stream opens into the marsh, where firmer patches of ground show themselves, the common spurwing goose may be seen in twos and threes, grubbing amongst the mud for the larvæ of water-beetles or some delicacy of root.

Spurwing Goose

These geese do not fall easy victims to light shot. The number of shot which is commonly used by hunters is BB or No. 3. Many men use the ordi-

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nary small-bore rifle in shooting this bird, for it presents an excellent mark as it stands on some bank, and of course a longer shot can be taken with a rifle than with a shot-gun, thus entailing less trouble in approaching the goose over possibly wet ground. These spurwing geese are common upon most of the marshes throughout the country. They seem to have a fear of crocodiles and do not frequent the rivers to any great extent where such reptiles are plentiful, which shows their wisdom. They are not hard to approach, for even when disturbed they will not fly far before they settle again, and they frequently make a circle over the head of the individual who has disturbed them before they fly off to some other shallow pool. This gives the man with the gun an excellent chance of getting one or two on the wing as they circle overhead. The flesh of this goose is dark and coarse and does not make a very appetizing dish, but it forms a rather pleasant variation in the daily routine of buck meat varied by tinned fish.

Ducks

Ducks of many varieties are found in large numbers on the marshes and rivers. On the Luapula River and the marshes close to it they abound by the thousand. On a pool in one of these marshes I one day killed twenty-five in two shots. A

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simple way to get good shooting is to select a spot on the corner of a marsh and make the natives drive the marsh towards the shooter. As the ducks fly singly or in numbers it is possible to get excellent sporting shots. The best size of shot is No. 4. If shooting for the pot the easiest way of getting a duck is to visit the pools in the marsh one after the other where the duck are generally swimming about, or to follow the banks of some small stream where there are numerous reeds amongst which duck may be sheltering.

SNIPE

I have seen three varieties of the snipe, the largest being the painted snipe, which, however, is not very common. It is usually a solitary bird, and in the rains may be found upon some of the higher ground where there are pools of shallow water amongst the grass. The best locality for this snipe is upon the Flats near the mouth of the Chambezi River and on the shores of Lake Bangweolo. The common jacksnipe is fairly plentiful in the localities which it favours. These are chiefly the plains which hold moisture during the rainy season, and shallow pools. Nearly all these wet plains, which are hard and dry during the winter season, hold snipe and often duck during the wet season, and the snipe exist in numbers where the ground is

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suitable, and give excellent sport to the shooter walking them up. No. 6, or even a smaller shot, is quite sufficient. The little grey snipe is not so common, and although found in the same localities, generally exists in pairs. Except for the sport it is scarcely worth shooting, its body, when dressed for cooking, being about the size of a walnut.

GUINEAFOWL

Flocks of this bird, numbering ten to twenty, though I have seen as many as fifty together—which may be due to two flocks joining—are common throughout Central Africa. Wherever they are found the soil is of a light and sandy character, because this kind of soil does not grow heavy grass, but a thin and short grass amongst which the guineafowl are able to wander easily and pick up seeds and insects. They commonly frequent native gardens where they can often be seen in the early morning lying dusting themselves in much the same manner as the domestic fowl. Many of the lesser cat tribe prey upon them, but their most persistent enemy is the leopard, which follows them as they feed amongst the grass till he gets a chance to spring upon one or more. To avoid his and other enemies' attentions the guineafowl at the approach of sunset always roost on the top of a high tree, and if possible will choose a dead tree where

there are no leaves. In the early morning they fly down from the tree to some puddle of water or stream where they drink, and then feed while the dew is still upon the grass. As the sun gets higher they make for the top of an ant-hill, or for some dry patch of sand, or a disused village garden, where they rest during the day. When feeding, and suddenly alarmed, they will not rise at once and take wing, but will run rapidly over the ground, kept together by the call of the cock bird which resembles so much the sharpening of a saw. If followed quickly they commence to rise from the ground and take flight in twos and threes, often flying to the top of a high tree.

There are two ways of shooting guineafowl, one sporting and one not. The non-sporting way is the commonest and might be called a "pot-shot for the pot." This is done by slowly following the guineafowl as they run along the ground, now and again waiting to give them a chance of collecting together, and as soon as they are bunched up, as is often their habit, into a small space of ground, to let fly both barrels loaded with No. 4 shot into the middle of them. This is the invariable method of the native hunter. The sporting shots are obtained by snapshooting them as they rise out of cover or fly from the top of a tree where they have been roosting. The guineafowl is the finest table bird in Africa, being

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invariably fat and juicy, though some colonists say the koorhaan beats him in flavour. This koorhaan is occasionally met with in the woodland, but is not common.

FRANCOLINS

There are three varieties of these African partridges, the large brown, the red-legged and the small grey. All three varieties are common, but one variety may favour a certain locality more than another; thus the grey partridge is found in hundreds on the lower and eastern part of the territory, while the large brown generally lives on the hills or rocky ground where seed-bearing wheats grow. It is this large partridge which springs up from the hunter's feet with such a noise when he is stealing through the woodland on the trail of some animal. Many a time, when I have been moving quietly along on the keen look-out for an animal which I was tracking, I have been startled by the sudden jumping up at my very feet of one of these birds which then proceeded to break the stillness of the woodland by shouting raucous warnings in partridge language to all who might hear him that an enemy was near. It is a curious thing that it is always when the hunter has no shot-gun handy that these partridges spring up out of the grass most plentifully. A sure way of finding them

is to try to pass through the woodland quietly on the track of a wounded animal; one may be certain then of walking on top of them. Often have I wished to have revenge upon them for the start they have given me, by marking them down and following up with a shot-gun, but have refrained, knowing that such revenge would entail losing the animal I was following, which would have been frightened by the discharge of the gun. These large partridges, like the red-legged variety, can frequently be shot by beating deserted gardens before sundown, when they furnish most sporting shots as they spring up on quick flight.

PIGEONS

A pleasant addition to the cooking pot can be made by shooting wild pigeons, of which there are several varieties. They are very plentiful in the neighbourhood of villages and where there are streams of running water. The best eating bird is that very pretty variety which lives in the Msito woods; living as it does upon fruits and seeds, this pigeon has a very fine flavour. It is very striking in colour, the head being green with bright coral bill and legs, while the feathers over breast and back are tipped with yellow-green, the colour being somewhat darker over the wings. The large wood-pigeon is usually met with in the woodland

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when one is hunting for big game, and for that reason is not often shot at.

Thus there is no difficulty for the big game hunter to vary the sport obtained by a rifle by an occasional day with a shot-gun; he can get interesting sport and can vary his often somewhat dreary menu by some succulent bird which he will have all the more pleasure in eating because he has shot it himself.

Chapter XVIII

THE ELAND

THE eland is one of the most common bucks in North-East Rhodesia, especially towards the north and west of the territory. It is a highly intelligent animal, and being possessed of remarkable eyesight, takes exceedingly good care of itself, and when alarmed it is able to travel very long distances without stopping. Another explanation of the great numbers of these animals is the fact that they are very carefully preserved and can only be shot upon special licences. This preservation allows the buck to increase markedly, and it is no unusual thing to see herds of 30, 40 or even 100 animals together. One such large herd exists in the open woodland country some ten miles south of Kasama. On two occasions I watched this herd feeding on an open plain, and amongst it were a large number of calves of all ages, besides four very large and old bulls.

This great increase in the number of the buck is not looked upon at all favourably by the natives. I do not think that there is a buck more destructive

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to native gardens than the eland. Being able to jump five feet high in spite of their huge bulk, there are but few gardens sufficiently protected by fences which will keep them out. At the time when the millet is ripening, which plant is used almost exclusively for flour and for the making of beer by the tribes that inhabit the Plateau, the eland become very troublesome owing to their constant visits to the gardens and the immense amount of damage they do. As the millet ripens at a time of the year when the grass has become starved, that is to say near the end of the rains, these fresh green patches of succulent millet, growing as they do in the woodland, become an irresistible attraction for the roan antelope and buffalo in addition to the eland.

The production of this grain requires a preparation which is given to no other cereal, and it may be interesting to detail the process. A native who desires to plant a patch of millet—the patches are never very large—goes to a part of the forest and chooses a slope, facing the south if possible; he then proceeds to climb all the trees within the area which he has decided shall be the limit of his garden, possibly thirty yards each way. The next step is to lop off all the branches from the summit of these trees, and at the same time cut down any sapling. This tangled mass of branches is allowed

to remain upon the ground to be thoroughly dried by the cold winds and the hot sun of the winter months. About the end of September, and sooner in some localities, these branches are arranged in a large circular pile round the bases of the trees from which they have been lopped. The depth of this mass of brushwood is about three feet; the area of ground covered depends upon the quantity of branches available. Just before the rains the brushwood is set fire to, and completely consumed, leaving a pile of soft ashes. There are two reasons for this burning, one being that the heat of the flame destroys any grass or shrub roots which might otherwise grow and choke the young millet; the other that the millet requires a great deal of the alkali which is obtained from the ashes of the wood, namely the potash. At the commencement of the rains the millet seed is sown amongst this ash, the ground being scraped lightly; after the first downpour the ash is carried into the burnt ground, forming a light black soil through which the young blades can easily push their way. As the millet grows longer the owner of the patch puts up a more or less flimsy fence of branches in the hope of keeping out buck. Frequently, also, he digs game pits round it so that if the buck should come to his garden he may profit by their visits in the shape of a load of meat.

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Unfortunately for the native agriculturist, the site which he chooses for his millet patches is generally in those parts of the woodland which the eland naturally frequents. I am sure that the eland, wandering about and tired of the drying herbage, look upon these patches of bright green millet as put there for their special benefit; and even where fences exist, the inconvenience they cause the eland in getting a quick meal does not deter them long, for where they cannot break them they will jump them. Once they are inside they will bite off all the ripening heads of the millet seed, and trample with their large hoofs what they cannot eat, so that what remains of a patch that they have honoured with their patronage for breakfast is of little subsequent value to the native owner. One old bull, which I shot just after it had left a millet garden, had its stomach completely full of this grain and nothing else. There were several villagers round its body while it was being cut up, and I asked them to estimate the amount of damage that this buck had done, upon a cash basis. The general consensus of opinion arrived at by them all was that there was enough grain to have made two baskets of flour valued at 1s. each, which means that this one meal of the eland bull would have been sufficient to feed a native family of three persons for a week. This demonstrates the amount

of damage a large herd of eland will do, wandering at will from garden to garden. Indeed, at this period of the year, they will leave all parts of the woodland where they have been passing the rest of the year, and take up their home close to the villages, showing no fear of the natives, who in fact have but little chance of resisting them as the use of guns is forbidden them. To prevent their ravages the owners of the gardens put up funny little huts upon the top of poles, fourteen or fifteen feet above the ground, and during the long nights, especially when they are moonlit, they keep watch from these huts, beating small drums or shouting out to scare off the eland or other buck.

Where villagers grow the cassava root the eland are equally persistent in their attention, and will even enter amongst the huts to get at the patches of the cassava root; they not only eat all the leaves of the plant, but will pull up the plant itself by the stem to get at the sweet root. If the stem breaks while the eland are pulling, as often happens, they will kick up the ground with their forefeet till they dislodge the root, and will not leave till they have eaten the garden out.

At this time of the year the best means to get a good eland is to visit a village where they are attacking the gardens. The next proceeding is quite simple, and consists in finding out from the head-



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Canoe on Lake Bangweolo. [R. A. Osborne.



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Crossing the Luangwa River.

[R. E. Young.

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man where the eland have been feeding most recently. This information will be readily furnished, as the villagers are only too delighted to get some one who will shoot the eland and furnish them with meat, at the same time scaring them away from their gardens; for, once they are shot at, the eland will disappear for some considerable time from that locality, and take up their residence many miles away, possibly at some other village. When the sportsman arrives at the garden to which he has been led by a native guide, perhaps a couple of miles from the village, the ground is carefully examined for the spoor. When the ground is very dry this is not always an easy task unless there are fresh droppings of the buck as a sure indication. However, once the spoor is verified as being fresh that morning the tracking is taken up by the natives. The bulls, as a rule, go off on their own, and wander from patch to patch before they finally rejoin the herd, so that the following of the particular spoor of a good bull is frequently a tedious process; it is frequently difficult, too, as it passes through patch after patch, wandering about amongst spoor days old, or through tangled dry grass, possibly much trampled, so that frequent casts have to be made to pick it up on some softer ground. The custom of the bull, once he has decided to make for the thick bush or shady trees after having satisfied his hun-

ger, is to lie down and rest about eight o'clock in the morning, frequently close to the last patch at which he has fed. As the sun gets higher and penetrates the shady places where he is lying, he rises and wanders off to where he has left his cows and calves. The combined herd under his leadership then go wandering up wind, either to the shade of some hill-side several miles away, or to the depths of some thick part of the wood where they will pass the hot hours of the day. As the wind commences to drop, towards five o'clock, they will get up and stretch themselves and start off in a leisurely way for some quiet and favourite watercourse to drink, after which they will make for the feeding grounds chosen for the night.

To return to the sportsman who is taking up the spoor of one of the bulls. If he is fortunate he may be able to get a shot by coming up to the bull before 9 a.m., ere it has moved off to rejoin the herd, in the usual way outlined above. But much more frequently he will see its tail as it goes lumbering off through the bushes, having caught sight of him or his trackers first. The eland, like all buck, always rests with its head up wind, and like the buffalo, lies on its own track, so that it is not an easy matter to approach it as it makes a small circle before lying down. Then the trouble is to make up with it, for, as I have said, when the eland is alarmed, it

trots along mile after mile. Very often, when the sun is at its height, about twelve o'clock, the wind dies down somewhat and the eland bull which is being followed will stop and wait about amongst the trees to get a sight of its pursuer. As the eland is large and easily discernible standing under the trees it is often possible then, by carefully keeping under cover, to approach it and put in a shot which will kill or disable it. At other times no such chance will be given, especially if the bull has joined on with others of its kind, for when they are in numbers they are able to keep a better watch than when single, and frequently present no chance to the sportsman of getting a successful shot. Many times I have followed one of these herds from the early morning till I have actually tired them out towards the late afternoon, covering a distance of anything up to twenty miles before I got a good chance of shooting.

Eland are very fond of making their home in that special woodland called "Chipia," which I describe in the chapter upon Buffalo, and they may be found in this Chipia along with buffalo, elephants, and other buck. One reason for their partiality for this Chipia is that besides the open spaces through which they love to wander, and the high trees under which they lie, they find a large quantity of the special bushes upon the leaves of

which they feed. The eland differ a good deal from other buck in that they are not so much grass as leaf eaters. There is one special tree, having a thick bark, and crowned like a palm tree with leaves resembling that of the chestnut tree, which the eland likes beyond the others. This tree grows to a height of five to six feet, frequently on the side or top of an old ant-hill, and is more common in these Chipias than elsewhere in the woodland. When the eland come upon these trees they eat them bare of leaves. When I have been going through a Chipia on the look-out for eland, I usually make a practice of examining these trees rather than hunting for spoor amongst the tangled grass, which is often trampled down by the many inhabitants of the place. For when a tree is found with leaves pulled off an examination of the broken stems will soon show whether the visit of the eland has been recent or otherwise. If the broken stems are still exuding moisture the eland cannot be far away, and it then becomes merely a matter of careful and noiseless tracking till he is found, usually resting amongst some of the bushes which are so characteristic of such a Chipia.

Another bush has a great attraction for this animal. It bears large rose-coloured or white flowers, as large as a breakfast cup, and grows in open spaces, often close to the streams which run

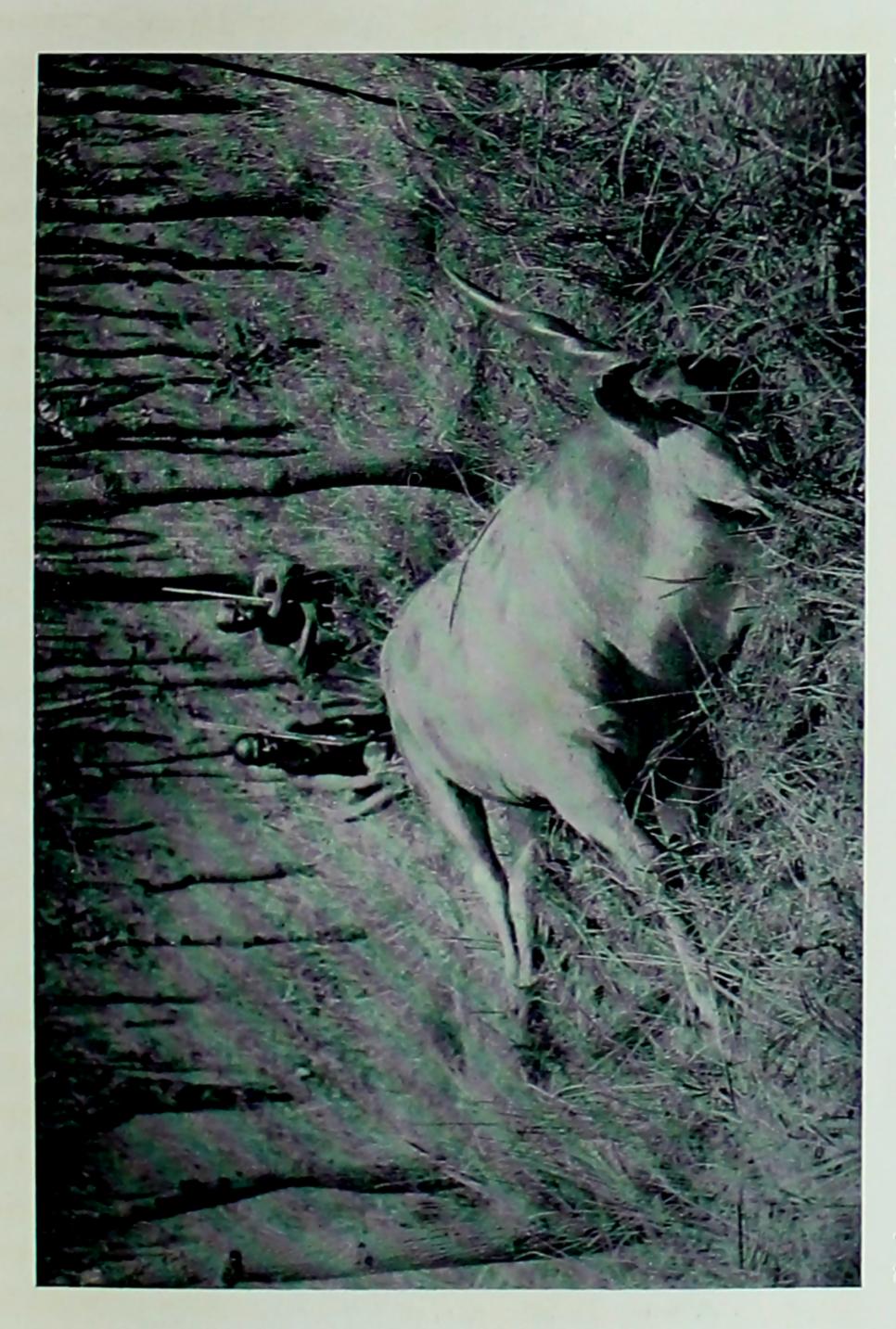
through small plains. These bushes, which are called by the natives "Masoso," are very plentiful on some of the sloping open plains that run down to the streams. These open spaces themselves are a characteristic part of the scenery of North-East Rhodesia, and are commonly called "Dambo." The eland which live in this woodland wander down to these streams to drink, and may often be seen in the late afternoon amongst the "Masoso." They do not seem to eat more than the buds and most tender leaves, but what they seem to like most is to break the branches off the bushes with their horns. As far as I know it is mostly the bulls of the herd that so amuse themselves, and an examination of the broken branches will show, according to whether the leaves are faded or fresh, whether a herd has recently been in that particular place.

Though I have said eland are found in considerable herds, yet it is quite a common thing to come across solitary old bulls wandering about. These bulls, possibly because they are too old, or possibly because they have been too quarrelsome for the quietude of a gregarious life, have been turned out of herd or have left it of their own accord. They seem to be quite content with their solitary existence, for when I have spoored them and they have been aware that they have been followed, they have never seemed to make any attempt to join with other

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eland for protection. Some of these bulls are so old that their original fawn-coloured coat with white stripes has disappeared and the hair which remains is grey and thin, so that the appearance of the bull is bluish. Some others of the old bulls are very dark, and when standing under the shade of a tree are not only difficult to distinguish from the surrounding objects in the shade, but appear to be almost as dark as water-buck, the hair having lost all gloss. The eland bull, besides being the largest buck in Africa and the strongest, is the heaviest, and sometimes runs up to two thousand pounds in weight. As they get old they get very fat, with a large dewlap tufted with dark hair which swings on the lower part of their breasts as they walk. At the same time the rough tufts of hair which grow upon their forehead and between the horns become longer and coarser and darker in colour. The best horns are not obtained from these animals as they are often worn down and chipped.

The eland of North-East Rhodesia differs from that found in Southern Rhodesia, not only in being smaller, but also in the shape and length of the horns, which do not reach the height of those found upon the eland of the south. There is a wide divergence between this type and the giant eland of Somaliland, very evident when one compares the heads and horns of the bulls. The horns of the



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North-East variety are perpendicular and close together at the points, very rarely being beyond 27 inches in a good bull. The horns of the Somali type spread outwards from base to points, and in some specimens there may be a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet between them.

In spite of its large size and strength the eland is a very timid animal in the presence of man, and not even when wounded and cornered will it ever attempt to defend itself. The natives say that when lions attack a herd they leave the bulls alone and endeavour to pull down a cow or calf. It is also said by them that when they smell lions in their vicinity the bulls and old cows of the herd form a circle, with the weaklings and calves in the centre, so that the lion or lions are unable to attack, as they have a wholesome respect for the look of the horns, which the cows of this species carry as well. Some of the bulls show many old scratches and bites from attacks by lions which have sprung upon their backs in attempts to pull them As soon as a lion springs upon the back of a bull he goes tearing away through the bushes and low-growing trees till he brushes the lion off, and the eland is the only buck in Africa which is of sufficient size and strength to be able to do this. As I have said, the marks of such conflicts show themselves permanently upon their hides in the

shape of long white scars clawed in parallel lines by the paws as the lion was brushed off. Though I have never actually seen such an occurrence it has been described to me by white men and natives who have witnessed it.

On one occasion after the rains, I saw the traces of such a drama upon the soft ground. The hoofmarks of the eland were impressed as he was quietly wandering over some clayey ground in open woodland; then, approaching him, were the marks of the paws of a big male lion coming up behind him and towards his right side for a spring. A little further on were the marks where he had leapt upon the back of the eland, and the deeply imprinted hoof-marks as the eland dug his feet into the soft ground to resist the shock of the charge; then, the rushing off of the frightened eland with the lion upon its back was shown by the plunging hoof-marks in the soft clay, the pad-marks of the lion being absent; fifty yards further on were two trees close together between which the eland had passed and where the lion had been brushed off, and there were the pad-marks of his four feet close together as he had gathered himself up after his dislodgment and stood looking after his vanishing prey, till he slunk off again a sadder and wiser lion, to look for some other more easily killed victim.

When the sportsman has only a limited time at his

disposal when big game shooting, there is always a large element of luck whether he gets exceptionally good or bad trophies from the heads of the bucks he shoots. This element of luck is very marked in the case of hunting the eland. They are seldom seen out in the open plains in the higher parts of the Plateau; and if they should be feeding in such places, the bulls keep such excellent watch for intruders upon their safety that it is no easy matter to get within a reasonable distance to use a large bore gun, which I consider the only suitable one to ensure killing this large animal. It may be easy enough on many occasions to hit them with a long range small bore rifle, but unless such a shot is fired through the neck or heart, the chances are that the eland may manage to escape.

Yet, to prove that there is an exception to all rules, even in shooting, my finest pair of horns, measuring 30½ inches in length, were got by means of a service 303. I was out one afternoon looking for buck on some open country, when I sighted a herd of eland scattered round some thin bush and anthills. After a long and careful detour, mostly up the bed of a stream, I got amongst some trees, and to my surprise saw the whole herd some fifty yards off on the other side of this small wood. I had only the one rifle, service 303, and that was loaded with solid bullet, as I had run short of the

ordinary soft-nose. My gun-carrier was frightfully excited when he saw the eland so close, and wanted me to start blazing into them, thinking of an unlimited supply of meat in the near future. As I then had only the licence authorizing me to shoot five eland, I was desirous of only shooting bulls, and if possible bulls with the best heads. I took the rifle from my man, and going forward a few yards stood behind a tree to await a chance of getting a clear shot at the best animal as they were slowly moving on the outside of the small wood in which I had taken up my position. I had not waited very long when a large grey-blue bull, stepping in a stately way, slowly moved from out of the herd and stopped not more than forty yards away from me just inside the wood, giving me an excellent chance of putting a bullet into him as he stood left side on. As soon as I had fired at him he gave a jump and tore away over the plain, followed by the whole herd. He travelled so fast that I did not think he could be seriously wounded, but he had not gone more than a quarter of a mile when he suddenly collapsed. When I got up to him I found the solid bullet had gone through his heart. The head and horns of this animal are now hanging on the walls of the Junior Conservative Club, London, and I believe is one of the best eland heads brought away from the country.

In this same herd I noticed another bull which seemed to have very fair-sized horns, and some weeks later I thought I would again camp on the same plain on the chance of once more coming upon the herd, and if possible getting this bull. The morning after I camped, I went out shortly after sunrise and followed the game path along the edge of the woodland upon the upper side of the plain, the slope of this plain being towards the stream by which my camp was pitched. Most parts of this path were sandy, and the numerous impressions which the buck had left as they emerged from the wood, and after feeding returned to their shelter, made the picking out of fresh spoor not an easy matter. However, some distance further along, I came upon some clear tracks, made by single elands, leading into the wood, and as the grass had been burnt most of the ground was bare, so that these hoof-prints were well marked. Some of these tracks were several days old, but after casting about we came upon a spoor of a large bull eland which seemed more recent on the sandy ground, and I decided, against the wishes of my natives, to follow it. Their objections were based on the fact that the spoor was at least twenty-four hours old, as they could verify by the examination of some broken branches which the eland had torn off a bush. argument was that by following this particular spoor

we might be able to come upon some still more recent spoor, as the eland bull was evidently occupying some part of the wood, leaving it night and morning to get to the stream of water. My views were justified, for, on proceeding to follow the trail for a few hundred yards, we arrived upon a fresh trail at right angles to the one we had been following. We were able at once to verify its freshness by finding a bush at which the bull had been feeding, the broken stems of which were still exuding sap.

This trail proceeded to some deserted gardens right in the middle of the wood, there being no native village near. Here again we were met with a perplexity of tracks leading in all directions in and out of the thick grass, which in some places was so high where the bush fires had missed it that I expected the first sight I should get of the eland would be its horns or the tip of its tail as it charged off. As a matter of fact, this is just what did happen, for while we were laboriously disentangling the fresh tracks of the morning from the numerous others made by that bull or his companions, a crash in the bushes made us aware that this bull, or some other eland, had discovered us and had made off. I got a glimpse of him as he passed between some trees, but the gun-bearer was so slow in passing me my rifle I was unable to get a shot. I saw enough of him, however, to notice

that he carried a splendid head and was a fullgrown bull. With one native only, the others being left behind as cover was very scanty after the fire, I followed hot foot upon the trail. Luckily there was no wind, and the loose ground, covered with light ashes in many places, was all in our favour, as the eland would thus be unable to scent us, and, as its habit is when unable to smell, would stop every now and again behind some ant-hill or tree to see whether it was still being pursued. Twice it did this while I was following, but on neither occasion did I get an opportunity for a clear shot. The trail gradually left this soft ground for some higher ground in the woodland, covered with short dry grass which the fire had missed. As my tracker was picking up the spoor on the hard ground, I suddenly saw the bull standing with its back towards me amongst some trees not forty yards away. To this day I have never been able to understand why it was so exceedingly careless of its own safety. Anyway, its carelessness gave me the opportunity of getting a steady shot into him from the service ·303, which I was carrying. An excellent shot for buck standing in this position, when it is not possible to manœuvre for a side shot, for fear of alarming them, is a shot fired at the root of the tail, which will either paralyze them or possibly enter the kidneys, preventing them from moving far.

My shot was a little too low and too much to the left, entering the hip-bone upon that side. The eland stumbled but gathered itself together and ran off, but very slowly, evidently hampered by the wound, so that I was able to make up to it and finish it with a shot through the heart. On taking the head back to camp I measured the horns, which were a perfect pair, the length being $29\frac{1}{2}$ inches each, and this head is hung beside that of the first one I shot.

The name of the plain in the native language is "Chibunda," and on referring to my game book I find that the dates upon which I shot these bulls were August 13 and 29, 1909, respectively. This plain is situated amongst the hills which rise some thirty miles east of the Luapulu River, and at one time was a very fine locality not only for eland, but also for sable and many other species of antelope. I believe, however, that it has been much shot by numerous native hunters who have acquired licences.

I have shot numerous cows, some of which had very fine horns, these of course being much more slender than those carried by the male. The longest pair of these cow-horns measured $27\frac{1}{4}$ inches, but were deficient in the grooving, which is so characteristic of the eland bull. Another pair, which only measured 25 inches, were very handsome and symmetrical, and showed the double grooving well marked,

but I did not consider them good enough to bring home as trophies.

In 1910, when the possession of a special licence allowed a sportsman to shoot unlimited eland, I took the opportunity of shooting a considerable number for their meat, but never succeeded in getting any horns amongst the cows which I considered good enough to send to England to be mounted, nor did I shoot any other bull with better horns than the two which I shot as described above, upon "Chibunda Dambo." My next best bull was one I shot in the Masama district, the horns of which measured $27\frac{1}{2}$ inches; other bulls shot in other parts of the country had shorter horns than this, so that I did not keep them as trophies.

The flesh of this animal is the finest, for eating purposes, of any buck in Africa, as it is frequently streaked with fat and resembles in consistence and flavour the finest home-fed bullock. All eland are passionately fond of the castor-oil plant which is very common in the country, not only near the villages, but in deserted gardens where they are self-sown. As the seeds are ripening the eland eats the pods and the young leaves, and at this period of the year the older eland have large deposits of fat lying round their kidneys, heart and breastbone, probably assisted by the quantity of castor-oil which they get from these plants. This

fat, when boiled and clarified, is much used by Europeans for cooking purposes, and is equal to the finest marrowfat, which all residents are obliged to use in a country where butter is worth its weight in silver. The tail of this animal makes one of the best of fly switches.

Chapter XIX

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

N all the larger rivers, and in the marshes through which a stream runs and where there are deep pools, the hippo lives. I do not think a more ugly animal exists, and I am sure in the past ages he took to the water and marshes to escape the ridicule of other animals, his appearance is so very grotesque. During the daytime they float about in the water, or sleep amongst the long grass and rushes close to the water's edge, into which they can plunge when alarmed. Sometimes, on going along a river in which hippos live, one has to observe the greatest caution not to run into a family of these beasts, for probably papa hippo, annoyed at the intrusion into his domestic circle, would make short work of the boat with his enormous jaws and formidable tusk-like teeth.

On one occasion a friend of mine, following a stream in a boat, nearly lost his life, together with those of his men who were paddling. They were passing a bank covered with high rushes, and as they got abreast of the bank a hippo chose that moment to

plunge into the river, just missing the nose of the boat. Had he landed on the boat it would have been death for them all, for, had they escaped being crushed, the crocodiles, which abound in that stream, would have made short work of them.

To give an idea of the enormous number of crocodiles in this river, I may mention that shortly afterwards my friend shot seventy-two of them in one day close to the swamp where he nearly lost his life, some of them being twenty feet in length.

The specific gravity of the hippo is the same as that of water, which enables them to float easily. They are also able to keep under water for a considerable time and to walk along the bed of the river. A favourite trick of a hippo which has been wounded is to sink under the water and, walking along the bed of the river, rise close to the boat from the owner of which he has received his wound. He will then make for the boat with his huge jaws wide open, breaking it like so much matchwood, possibly killing some of the occupants at the same time. Such a fate recently befel a naturalist who was investigating insect life on the Zambesi River. A wounded hippo made for the canoe in which he was, and crushed it, injuring him at the same time, for he was never seen again. The native paddlers saved their lives by jumping out of the boat, as the hippo rose, and swimming ashore.

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On rivers where the hippos have been much shot at they look upon boats as their natural enemies and will frequently attack them without provocation.

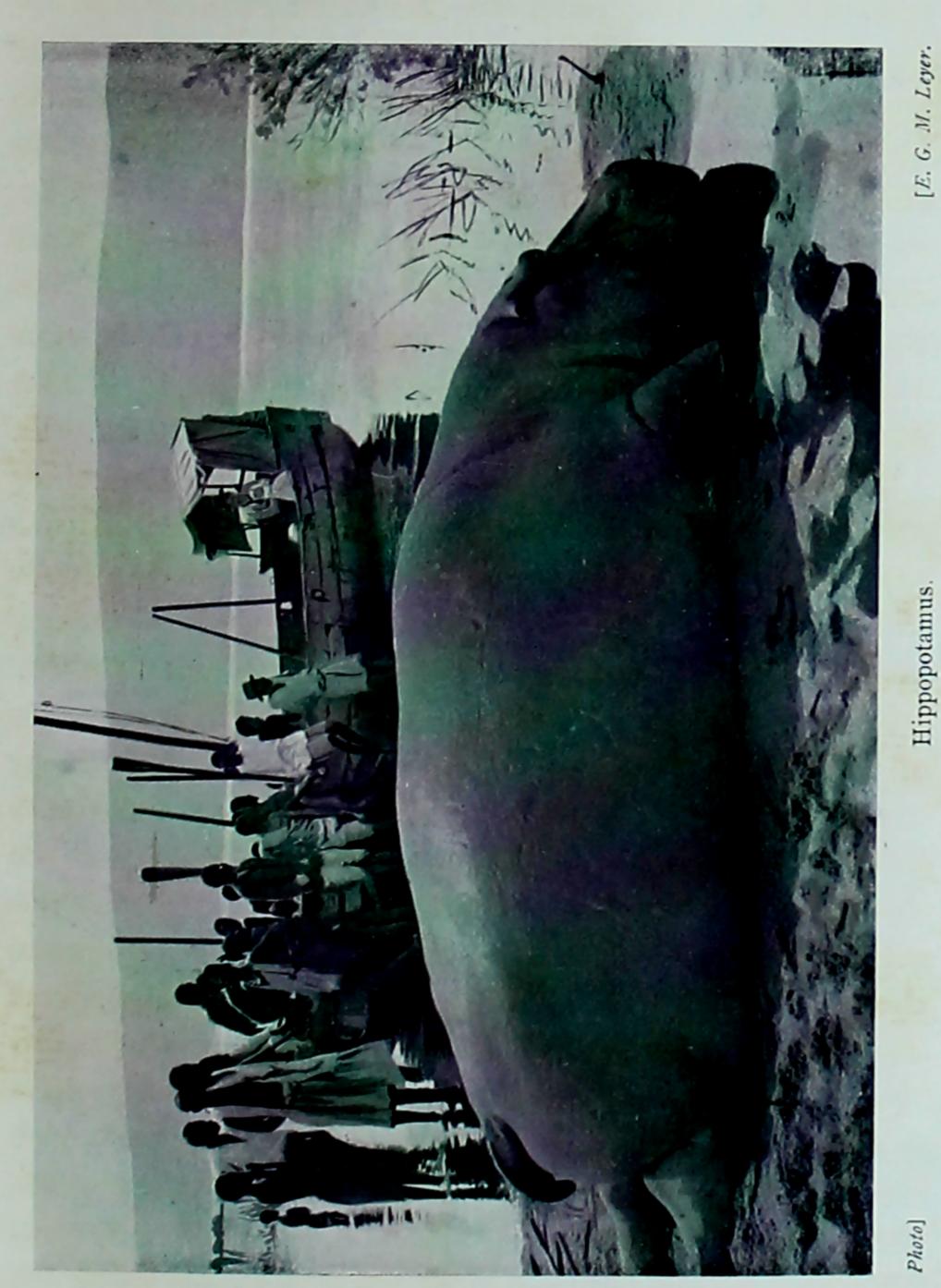
These animals leave the water at night and climb up the banks of the river, where they feed upon a certain species of soft grass. They will often travel miles inland, returning before dawn to the river.

There are two methods followed by sportsmen to get a shot at these animals, the one being followed by day, the other by night. During the daytime the sportsman walks quietly along the river-bank till he sights a hippo, or hippos, in the water. He must keep well under cover or else he will never get a chance of a shot, as the hippo is very keensighted. All he then has to do is to get into such a position that he can command the hippo as it moves about in the water till it gives him a fair chance of taking a shot between his eyes or into its ear by no means an easy task, as the hippo in the water only shows a small part of its head. If the shot has been successful the hippo will at once sink, appearing some hours later as the gases cause its body to swell. If the shot should be unsuccessful the hippo will disappear just the same, but will make off under the water and bob up a long distance away, probably not giving another opportunity for a shot.

Occasionally it happens that one may be lucky enough, on carefully approaching a river, to find hippos standing in the shallows; this good fortune happened to me on one occasion, and I was enabled to shoot three of them. The best shot for an exposed hippo is one at the lungs or heart, for if the shot miss the heart and go into the lungs the hippo will at once make for the shore, as it will soon suffocate in the water owing to water being drawn into the lungs through the bullet hole in its side.

The method adopted to shoot hippo when they come ashore at night to feed is as follows. Hippo generally use the same path each night leading from the water to the higher ground beyond. Having ascertained from the natives where they usually leave the water to feed, it then becomes a question of taking up a position in the dusk, commanding the path by which they leave the water. As these animals have a keen sense of smell, and are also able to see in the dark, like all night feeders, it is necessary, when choosing a position, to sit and wait for them to leave the water, and to see that it is well under cover and that there is no chance of the hippo being prevented from landing through their suspicions being roused by scent. If at all alarmed they will refuse to land, and will go up or down stream, landing above or below the path which they consider is dangerous. It is sometimes amusing to

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hear a school of hippo in the water below snorting and grunting with indignation, because they are unable to climb up the path they have been accustomed to follow night after night, owing to its obstruction, possibly by a boat being anchored at the edge.

When examining the Luapula River for sleeping sickness flies, I pitched my tent one night upon a bluff overhanging the river which was covered with the grass that the hippo is fond of eating, and this patch of grass had been pretty well eaten by hippo. I chose this bluff because an easy path led up to it from the river, whose banks are often precipitous and bush-grown. A great part of the night I could hear the hippos in the water below, snorting with annoyance that their favourite path to their feeding ground beyond should be obstructed in such a strange manner. Had I wished I could easily have shot one or more from my tent door, they were so close to the shore. This, however, I dared not do in case of wounding one, for as I was travelling the river in a small native canoe, the chances were that the wounded hippo would have made short work of my boat the following day. On this trip of five days' travelling in a canoe on this big river I saw numerous hippo, but to the great disappointment of my natives, could not fire at any of them for the reasons above stated. Several times, on

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coming round the bend of the stream, I saw a family party of hippos, splashing about in the water. At sight of the canoe, the old bull, with his monstrously ugly head raised well out of the water, would roar a challenge at me to warn me off, and my paddlers, taking the hint, would shoot the canoe well out into mid-stream and to the other side close to the bank, which bank they would follow till again forced to adopt the same tactics by coming upon another school upon that side. Several times it happened that as we turned to make for the other side, the ugly head of the old bull in charge of the others would sink slowly under the water, giving me the feeling that, having marked the position of my canoe, he would make his way rapidly along the bed of the river, and that the next time I should see him would be with jaws widely open as he rose under the canoe to crush it.

While I was examining the banks of this river I saw several of the formidable hippo traps which had been set up by the Congo natives who esteem the flesh of the hippo as a great delicacy. The trap is made by driving a strong spear-head, some three feet in length, into a heavy log of wood. At the other end of this log is placed a ring, through which a rope passes, which in turn is suspended to a branch of a tree above, the rope passing over this branch down to the ground, under a hooked stick put

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into the ground and then being fastened to a tree or post at the other side of the path which the hippo use when they leave the water. The part of the rope which passes over the path is about a foot above the ground. As the hippo comes along his feet hit against this rope, dislodging it from the hooked stick at the side of the path, and down comes the heavy log of wood at a run from the branch of the tree, the weight of the wood driving the spear into its neck or shoulders. Such traps are forbidden in British territory.

An adaptation of this trap, the logs being lighter, was formerly used by natives for killing buck in the woodland, but such traps, when found by officials, now bring a speedy punishment by imprisonment upon the Chief who permits them, as so many deaths have occurred of human beings who walked along the path unconscious of the suspended spear till they dislodged it by coming in contact with the rope. One European at least has met his death in this manner. This unfortunate man was out shooting one morning and passed along a narrow path through the bush, and before the natives who were with him could stop him the spear had transfixed him through the shoulders as the log fell.

Now to return to the sportsman we have left on the bank waiting for the hippo to come out; he

will often find this waiting somewhat tedious, especially if he is a smoker, for he will be debarred from lighting a pipe or cigarette for fear of spoiling his chance of a shot. In addition he will be plentifully bitten by large and ferocious mosquitoes which revel at this unexpected feast and trumpet their joy shrilly into his ear. When the night is clear and the whole country is bathed in bright moonlight the waiting is less tedious, for then all objects can be seen clearly and the tedium is enlivened by the occasional sight of animals coming down to the banks of the river to drink. Sometimes this may be a herd of puku, who, in their fear of crocodiles, take mouthfuls of water and jump back quickly as they swallow it; or it may be a fine water-buck standing guard over his inferior-looking cows. Sometimes that mean-looking scavenger, the hyena, will slink out of the bushes and creep stealthily down the path to drink ere he goes on his long midnight tramp after scraps of carrion. The African night is a silent one, and to the waiting watcher for hippos this silence is rather accentuated than broken by the weird call of a hyena, or the booming roar of a lion celebrating the pulling down of a buck in the woodland some miles away. Even the numerous frogs, croaking in the pools, or the call of some nightbird will not break the feeling of isolation which envelops Europeans of any



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imagination thus spending the night out in the African wilds.

When the hippo are satisfied that they can come up in safety, the waiting sportsman will hear them grunting and splashing as they leave the water to mount the path, which is often a pretty steep one. He must not then be too much in a hurry to fire, especially if he wants to get a big bull, which carries the large teeth. As they pass in front of his vantage point he can wait quietly till the hippo he has chosen is abreast of him. As there is never much light on the banks of these rivers, owing to the number of trees and bushes, it is not easy to get an accurate shot. Perhaps the best shot is one fired as near the shoulder as possible, on the chance of reaching the heart, or of causing such damage to the lungs that the animal will not be able to remain in the water for which he will at once make. The rifle used for this class of shooting should always be of large bore and loaded with solid bullets, the skin of the hippo, as is well known, being very thick. A hippo wounded on shore will not be lost, for as it turns to make for the river another shot can always be fired into it, and should it succeed in reaching the water it will immediately turn and make for shore again, for fear, as I have already explained, of being drowned through the water entering its lungs through the

hole in its side. This ends the description of the night-shooting of hippo, which is perhaps the most interesting way, but not by any means always the most comfortable, chiefly owing to the persistent attacks of the mosquitoes.

The hide of the hippopotamus is used to make sjamboks and walking-sticks. The teeth consist of good ivory and can be mounted in many ways as trophies, and are also cut up by natives to make handles for knives.

Chapter XX

THE BUFFALO

THE African buffalo or Bos Caffir, before the Rindepeste ravaged the territory, was one of the commonest animals in North-East Rhodesia. Every marsh and woodland had its herds. After the pest, from all accounts, the numbers remaining were exceedingly few, so few indeed, that many white officials acting as Commissioners never saw the trace of one in places where previously large herds had existed. Now they are exceedingly plentiful again, and there is no difficulty in getting plenty of shooting and very good heads. Practically these buffalo exist wherever the ground is suitable, either in small family groups or in large herds of 200, such as are found near Bangweolo. The buffalo are the shyest of all the animals, hating the sight and smell of human beings, and when wounded, there is certainly no animal to rival them for vindictive fierceness and desire for revenge. lives lost through attacks of wounded buffalo are certainly as many as those destroyed by lions, elephants or any other animals. They are curiously

conservative in remaining in the part in which they are bred, and have their own regular habits of feeding in these localities and in drinking at a certain water-course each day. This regularity in their habits gives the hunter an excellent chance of finding them and getting a shot.

They are essentially night feeders, leaving the shelter of the woods, in which they have passed the day, after sundown to go and drink. Their procedure is always the same; first of all the bull which is the leader goes wandering away up wind, making a large de tour all round while his herd stand waiting his return, swishing their tails against the flies, which persistently follow buffalo. When he is satisfied that there is no danger, and the wind is free from taint of man or lion, the only two animals he dislikes, he returns to his herd and they slowly move off, one behind the other, to drink at the chosen stream. This stream may be several miles away from their resting-place. Having reached the stream the leader drinks first, then stands behind the herd as a guardian while they drink. He then leads the herd off to some ground where the coarse grass of which they are so fond is plentiful, possibly many miles away from the water. The buffalo feed slowly all night, keeping close together, the old bull every now and again making his watchful detour to protect his herd from surprise by attack

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from lions which, however, have a wholesome respect for him, although they will attack and pull down calves or possibly young cows. I have only once heard of a bull being pulled down by lions. This occurrence was seen by Mr. Ryan of Fort Jameson, who saw two young male lions and a lioness attack, pull down and kill a solitary young bull buffalo.

In the grey light of early dawn the buffalo commence to leave their feeding ground and make for a resting-place to pass the hot hours of the day. The old bull, still keeping up his watchful tactics, goes on ahead sniffing the light breezes, the rest of the herd following at a distance in Indian file. After going some way, when the sun is up and before the trade winds have started to blow, which is about 7 a.m. in the dry season and later in the wet season, the buffalo find a shady place, generally on the edge of a wood, and lie down for an hour or more, the old bull standing to keep watch. As the sun mounts higher and the flies become more persistent, they rise up and begin to trek for the hills. Buffalo are very fond of lying up amongst rocks, especially when these rocks crop up amongst shady trees, leaving open spaces between where they can stand or lie down. When lying down they always face the trail by which they have come.

In country which is rather flat and heavily wooded

buffalo, like all game, are fond of taking shelter or resting in a certain peculiar formation of the woodland which is called, in the Chibemba language, a "Chipia." This Chipia is invariably of the same character wherever found throughout the territory. It consists of large places, nearly always of a dead level, with very high grass, many small trees and a few very large ones, dotted here and there. The soil is very light, frequently sandy, and the growth of grass during the rains is luxuriant, sometimes reaching a height of ten feet, or even more, so that an elephant can hide himself comfortably amongst it even when standing upright. In other Chipias the grass is not always quite so long, but varies from a scanty to patches of larger growth. No water is ever found in these Chipias; they act as huge receiving beds for the rain, and the water finds its way out in springs at the edge of these tablelands, so that animals, lying up here, may have to wander a mile or two before they can get a drink. All sorts and species of grass grow on these open spaces, especially the coarse grass that buffalo are so fond of eating. Chipias have straight paths through them in various directions, made sometimes by elephants, and sometimes by buffalo, which latter frequently make their home here, owing to the cover, in preference to sleeping in shady woods.

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When spooring buffalo into a Chipia where the grass is very high, the greatest precaution should be taken not to run right into the herd, for it is impossible to see a few yards ahead. Needless to say, to follow a wounded buffalo into such cover would be a most foolhardy proceeding. On ordinary occasions, when it is simply a case of tracking the buffalo for a shot into a grass-grown restingplace, natives should be sent up the trees from time to time to try to get a view of the animals at which one wishes to get a shot. Having located the resting herd, the native will signal down from the tree to the hunter exactly where they are; it then devolves upon the latter to try to get a clear sight of them, which is never an easy matter amongst this dense grass. It may be possible to do so if there is a large ant-hill on which he can climb. If he is fortunate he may be able to get a shot at a bull.

As soon as he has fired, the buffalo will charge about wildly in all directions, crashing through the undergrowth, so that it is extremely dangerous for any one to be in the grass where nothing can be seen except a large body tearing here and there to the accompaniment of breaking branches. If the bull has not been killed stone dead by the first shot he will at once move off, even when badly wounded, to seek escape. The following of his blood spoor I regard as a most thrilling and dangerous proceeding.

A wounded buffalo will always leave the herd and make off by himself. Indeed, the herd would not suffer a wounded animal for one moment as they hate the smell of blood so much. On one occasion, when I had wounded a cow buffalo, she went off with the herd for some distance till they repelled her, as I knew when coming up with her subsequently, for she had several lacerations from the horns of the other animals.

The method pursued by a wounded buffalo is always the same: he will first go off for some distance, then come round in a circle down wind. The pain of the wound seems to rouse in him a ferocious intelligence to understand what his enemies will do, and he realizes that they are following his trail. As soon as he has found a spot to his liking, where there is cover and a good position commanding the path he has just left, he waits sullenly, with lowered head, for his enemy so that he can take revenge. It is risky, therefore, to follow the trail of a wounded buffalo where there is much cover, for it is impossible to anticipate from one moment to another when this large bulk of black ferocity will suddenly launch itself out to gore and trample upon oneself or the beaters. Experienced hunters, in following a wounded buffalo down wind, will make detours now and again from the trail on the chance of seeing where he is, or else will send their

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native followers up trees or ant-hills. Sometimes it is a good plan to wait an hour, or even more, before taking up the trail, to give the buffalo time to lie down and allow his wound, or wounds, to stiffen. If the trail leads directly amongst thick rocks, or skirts the side of ant-hills, additional caution must be observed, for these are the very posts of vantage behind which the buffalo chooses to wait. Disregard of this caution cost Mr. Crosbie his life in 1910. He was following a wounded buffalo, the trail of which skirted a large ant-hill. Instead of passing round the other side of the ant-hill, or climbing it to look over, he bravely, but incautiously, kept on the trail, and as soon as he got round the ant-hill was charged by the waiting buffalo, which killed him instantly, subsequently trampling upon him.

On another occasion the same want of caution nearly resulted in the death of a well-known native elephant tracker, who was carrying the gun for a friend of mine now dead. This friend had wounded a buffalo bull and had located it in a patch of long grass. Without warning the bull charged out and tossed the gun-carrier. To save himself, he caught the bull by the horns as he was tossed again, which gave my friend the opportunity to run up quickly and drop the bull with a .450 bullet in the neck. The injuries sustained by the gun-carrier were a deep wound in his right groin, which had just missed

the femoral artery, and several minor lacerations. The stock of the gun was also badly broken, probably by the trampling of the foot.

Another friend of mine, Mr. Osborne, who is well known throughout the territory, not only for the work he has done but also as a big game hunter, had an exciting experience of a similar kind. As soon as he had fired at the buffalo, the herd being in thick grass, the rest of the herd charged about wildly in all directions, passing and repassing him within a few yards. One of the bulls rushed out, passing Mr. Osborne by a few feet, and pitched his gun-bearer several yards away. Before any further damage could be done to the latter Mr. Osborne was able to drop the bull with a shot through the heart.

The following true story will illustrate the vindictive ferocity of a wounded buffalo. A few years ago a man well known in East Africa had wounded a buffalo and had given up the trail. On the following day, on breaking camp, he allowed all his men to go on before while he followed some distance behind, carrying a light rifle. On the path ahead of him he saw the dark form of a buffalo waiting amongst some trees. As he went closer to have a good view before firing, the buffalo suddenly charged at him so that he had just time to dodge behind a tree. It was then literally a game

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of hide-and-seek behind the tree, which was finished by the buffalo's horn catching in his coat. It then, from the account given subsequently by this sportsman, tossed him thirteen times high in the air. Tiring of tossing him, the buffalo then tried to crush him by weight of its chest and knees, but could not manage it properly owing to the wound in its shoulder, this being the same buffalo at which the sportsman had fired the previous day. As it knelt over him attempting to crush him he kept it off as much as he could by shoving his thumbs into its eyes. The buffalo then retired a short distance and lay down snorting with rage and pain and watching its victim. The latter, on attempting to crawl to where his gun lay, was again charged by the buffalo and once more tossed, this time falling into an antbear hole where he lost consciousness. His porters, alarmed at his prolonged absence, came back to look for him and carried him in to a station where he was looked after, and subsequently quite recovered from his injuries and breakages and became quite ready to face such dangers again. The buffalo was found dead some distance away, one of its eyes being destroyed by the thumb of this courageous man.

I should recommend the tyro who wants to get his first buffalo—after the feeding ground of a herd has been located by his natives—to go there in

the very early morning, say about five o'clock, for this will give him the best chance of getting an easy and safe shot. It is possible sometimes to approach to within one hundred yards of buffalo, when they are feeding steadily, if caution is taken to avoid being seen or smelt. Mr. Lyons, a well-known official and first-class shot of big game, for many years resident in North-East Rhodesia, was once charged in an open plain by a bull he had wounded while it was feeding. He dropped this bull within a yard or two of his feet by a shot in its shoulders from a black powder '577 rifle. This is not usual, for nine times out of ten a wounded buffalo will make off at first.

Owing to the very thick skin of a buffalo I consider that a heavy rifle should be used and a solid bullet. Though it is often possible to kill a buffalo with a soft-nose bullet fired from a Mauser of 7.9, or from a ·303 into the lungs or heart at close range, it is always better to fire a shot which will cripple or do the greatest amount of damage to such a dangerous animal. Such wounds are produced by ·450 and ·500 cordite express rifles, and also by such hard-hitting rifles as those turned out by Westley Richards or Jeffrey.

Chapter XXI

THE RHINOCEROS

THE first sight of a rhinoceros must inevitably suggest that it is a relic of prehistoric times when the earth was covered with giant lizards and uncouth monsters of all sorts of shapes and sizes. The particular kind found in North-East Rhodesia is the black, double-horned variety. A few specimens have been shot carrying three horns. One thus adorned was shot close to the Chambesi River in the spring of 1910 by Captain Piscirelli, the aide-de-camp of Her Royal Highness, the Duchess d'Aosta, who was making a shooting trip through the country.

South of the Chambesi this animal is very plentiful, and little trouble is required on the sportsman's part to get on the tracks of one, and follow it until either it gets a sight of him or he gets a shot at it. There is quite a possibility of the rhino opening hostilities first, because he hates intrusions, and usually shows his resentment in no unmistakable way by suddenly charging the intruder at top speed, with his horns well lowered.

For some reason or other the rhino enjoys a reputation of great ferocity, but I think he has been somewhat maligned. All he wants is to be left in peace, and when disturbed, his endeavour is to rid himself of the intruder, if possible, and then get away to some other part of the woodland where he may root about without molestation. He is not endowed with very good eyesight, but has a very keen sense of smell, and when his nose is greeted with the scent of a human being, his first instinct seems to be to charge direct for the place where he has located the repugnant smell. If he fails to find the intruder, he will not hunt him about, but will often go straight off without troubling further about him. Also, if he should manage to attack the intruder with his horns he will be satisfied to pass him out of his way, and shows no great desire to linger over his victim.

Some little time ago a native walking from one village to another on the other side of the Lovu River was killed by a rhino in this manner. The rhino had been standing close to the path, and sighting or smelling the native, at once charged him, and killed him with his horns.

The natives generally have a great fear of this animal, and give it a reputation of being most truculent and fierce, saying that it will even attack elephants.

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Rhino have a very peculiar habit of scattering their droppings with their horns so that the droppings, which somewhat resemble those of an elephant, are broken up and tossed about widely. I cannot myself give any explanation for this habit, but the natives have an amusing reason. They say that when the Creator made all animals He gave a needle to each, so that it could sew its own skin on; the rhino unfortunately lost his, and had to do the best he could with a large thorn, hence his badly fitting skin. The original rhino was much distressed by the loss of his needle and came to the conclusion that he must have swallowed it by mistake; so he got into the habit of always examining his droppings to see whether it had turned up, and all his descendants have acquired a like habit.

Rhino are very conservative in their habits, and will be found feeding in the same woods or plains day after day. They show a certain fondness for a glossy-leafed bush which grows on the plains, usually close to the more dense woodland, and these they will root up with their horns, perhaps to eat the roots. A useful way of locating the fresh spoor of one of these animals, is to walk along the edge of the woodland and examine these broken-up bushes till one recently visited by the rhino is found, when the spoor can be taken up.

Usually the rhino are in pairs, and during the rains are frequently accompanied by a calf.

Large and solitary spoor is an indication of an old bull; some of these bulls are very old, and their horns are not much good for trophies, as they are worn down and frequently damaged. As everybody knows, the rhino has only three toes.

The best season of the year to track rhino is, of course, during the rains when the ground is soft, and there is no trouble in following it. The only thing necessary is to keep a very sharp look-out ahead.

Though frequently found lying up in patches of grass, where the woodland is thin with little undergrowth, there is often great difficulty in locating them in thick, bushy country, especially where there are many clumps of thorns; and it is certainly no easy task to distinguish the male from the female rhino in the bush. In such places it is often thrilling work following up their spoor, as one never knows from one moment to another if one is going to run into them suddenly, or, what would be much more disconcerting, if they are going to charge without any warning upon the hunter. When these bushes are thorny and very dense, the only path possible to follow is that made by the rhino or rhinos as they have shoved their way through. Consequently, the only means of retreat is by the same path. The animal seems to

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know that the thorns, which do not affect his thick hide, will form an efficient barrier against the disturbance of his rest by other animals not similarly equipped.

My first rhino was shot in such country. It was during the rainy season, when the ground was very soft, and I noticed on coming into a village that a double track of rhinos had crossed the path that morning. I had been out after buffalo, but was unsuccessful in coming up to them. On arriving at the village late in the afternoon, I asked the head-man about these rhino, and he informed me that they had been feeding not more than a quarter of a mile away from the village, for a week, coming down to drink at the same stream from which the village drew its water.

Though the weather was very wet and broken I decided that I had a fairly good chance of getting a sight of and possibly a shot at my first rhino. On the following morning, which was grey with threatening rain-clouds, I went out with two gunbearers, one of whom had been in my service for some time, and was one of the best trackers of game in the country, and who had the additional advantages of being fearless—as I had proved by taking him out elephant shooting—and of having a profound knowledge of the habits of game.

Following the path by which I had entered the

village the previous day I found the fresh spoor of where the rhino had crossed close to the water into some open country containing a plentiful supply of a root which they are very fond of eating. We followed this track for some time, seeing nothing of the rhino, however. Presently one of the villagers brought us word that the rhino had recrossed the path some half mile further up the hill. We at once made for the place indicated by the villager and took up the trail. This led from patch to patch of mimosa-thorn bushes. Several times, noticing the strong rank smell which rhino leave where they lie, I expected to see them. However, either dissatisfied with the places they had chosen, or having heard us, they had occupied and vacated several clumps of these mimosa bushes. As I was wearing a pair of khaki cotton shorts I was getting somewhat tired of forcing my way through these bushes, for my bare knees were suffering severely from contact with the thorns, and I am sure I left quite a good blood spoor. Finally, after an hour of this thrilling and painful tracking, the rhino being evidently on the move, I came to a dense clump of bushes into which a well-beaten path led, which showed it to have been occupied by the rhino on other occasions. I followed up this path through the bushes, myself carrying a .500 Winchester magazine express rifle, my favourite gun-bearer



Photo]

Wart Hog (male).

[E. G. M. Leyer.



Photo]

Cow Rhinoceros.

[F. H. Melland.



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close behind carrying a 303 service rifle, loaded with solids, and came to a small clearing about six yards across, and peering over the top of a thorn bush, I saw the point of a horn and the twitching ears of a rhino some two yards away. It was standing with its head turned from me. I took a careful shot, aiming for the base of the right ear. As soon as I fired it went down, but quickly got on its feet again and wheeled round, making for me where I was wedged behind a thorn-bush. I got another couple of shots in quick succession into its chest and side, the head of the animal being scarcely a yard from me when I fired the last shot. It then lurched over and fell on its knees, when I finished it off with a shot through the heart.

To my regret this proved to be a cow, accompanied by a calf of about a year old which I had not seen till I had killed the mother. There was no indication from the size of the horn, as seen by me at first, that this was a female. A loud crashing amongst the bushes in front of me warned me that the male rhino, disturbed by the firing, had broken out from where he had been lying and was somewhere close by. Some natives who had taken refuge in a tree were able to see over the tops of the thorn bushes and indicated to me that he was still standing some forty yards away wondering what all the noise was about.

During this time the little baby rhino was nosing about its dead mother, keeping up a constant bleating call which made me regret more than ever that the female rhino should carry horns like the male, which similarity led to its death. As I cautiously made my way in the direction in which the natives were pointing I came upon the male some fifty yards away standing facing us in a small clearing between the bushes. As he was on the point of charging I fired at his head. He staggered and I thought he was going down, but, recovering, he went charging away through the bushes, and a subsequent shot at his retreating bulk seemed to take effect. I followed his trail for some time till a heavy rain descended, and as he showed no signs of stopping, or even of being seriously injured, and as I was wet to the skin and very cold, I left the trail and returned to the village where a warm bath in my tent and a change of clothing made me comfortable once more.

The following day I sent two villagers to follow the wounded rhino's trail, but they saw no trace of him, so my hope has been that the shot in the head glanced off his thick skin and that he finally returned to look for his mate, and took away his baby to some other part where they might dwell in peace together. The body of the dead rhino was promptly cut up and eaten by the villagers,

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who rejoiced in the opportunity of filling themselves with so much fresh meat.

Although this was actually the first rhino I had killed, I had seen them before when shooting other game, and on one occasion wounded a bull, but the bullet, being a soft-nosed from a ·303, did not do it much harm, and it disappeared, and though I followed it for some distance I never saw it again. I was on the trail of an eland bull I had wounded at the time, and this rhino with a companion was lying in a thick patch of grass through which the eland had passed, the track of the eland leading almost on to where the rhino lay.

Another experience I had in shooting rhino was as follows:—I was travelling from one camp to another during the rainy season, and having gone about six miles, had sat down to have breakfast, when one of my men, who had been accompanying the porters who had gone on ahead, came back to where I was seated to tell me they had seen the spoor of a very large rhino which had crossed the path within an hour or two previously, and that all the caravan were resting by the spoor in case I wanted to follow the rhino; they were afraid if they proceeded they might either disturb the animal or possibly be charged by it. I sent back word for them to wait and that I would come and examine the spoor. On arriving at the place where the

spoor had crossed the road, I saw that it had been made by a very large and solitary bull. The ground being very light and sandy the track was easy to follow; it led away from the direction in which we were making for camp, so I sent my caravan on to pitch my tent some ten miles further along, as rain was threatening, and kept a few men back, in case I shot the rhino, to carry the horns, and the meat, of which all natives are very fond. This rhino had lain down twice, and each time wandered on. The woodland was very open, without much cover, except for occasional clumps of small bushes which would give him but little concealment, and we were able to keep a sharp look-out for some distance ahead, and were quite safe from any sudden surprise of his charging. After going some distance through the woodland, the wind being favourable to us, I got a strong whiff of the unmistakable scent of a rhino; the scent was also noticed by my favourite gun-bearer, and we came to the conclusion that the rhino was probably lying down in a clump of bushes some fifty yards ahead. We took the opportunity to climb a convenient ant-hill, and over the tops of the bushes we saw him lying asleep, close to another ant-hill fringed with bushes, under the shade of some large trees.

Making our way down from our point of vantage as carefully and quietly as possible, and using such

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cover as there was, I was able to get within fifteen yards of where we had seen him lying. A part of the base of this ant-hill gave me a convenient standing place, from which I could see him clearly with his left side towards me. Choosing the base of his left ear, I gave him a bullet from my Winchester, upon which he sprang up with a snort of rage and came straight to where I was standing. Another shot quickly fired smashed his right foreleg close to the shoulder, which turned him, and as he turned I got another body shot in. He went on, however, fairly fast, making for a Chipia some distance away. Following the spoor for about half a mile I came upon him standing, looking very sick, just outside the bush. A bullet fired into his neck at twenty yards distance dropped him stone dead.

On examining him I found the reason why I had not killed him at the first shot. My bullet, instead of entering the brain through the ear, had pierced the lobe, and, striking the hard, thick bone of his skull, had travelled round backwards under the skin, and lay in the neck. The horns he carried were disappointing as trophies, having very large bases, but had been much worn down. When in his prime the front horn might have been 30 inches long. This rhino was probably thirty or forty years old, his teeth, as well as his horn, being much worn down.

I do not know at what age rhinos reach maturity in Africa, nor how long they live, but as they have no enemies except man, they probably live longer than any other animal but the elephant.

Chapter XXII

THE ELEPHANT

I T always seems to me a pity that the African elephant has proved itself so intractable in training. In a country such as North-East Rhodesia, where there is at present no transport, except by native carriers, horses and mules being unable to exist owing to a sickness which soon destroys them, the elephant would be an enormously valuable animal. As it is, the only use to which he is put is to furnish ivory for commercial uses by his death. When I look at the huge bulk of the dead elephant I invariably feel that I have destroyed with my bullet the wisest creature in the animal world that exists in Africa, for there is no doubt that the African elephant is highly intelligent. The possessor of a good pair of tusks must live in constant fear of sudden death. There are but few of these tusker bulls in the country that have not been followed and shot at at one time or other; indeed it is quite a common thing after one has shot one of these animals for the men who are cutting up the meat to bring many old iron bullets which have

been fired into it by traders or natives in the days when express rifles were unknown. As elephants are possessed of the best of memories, they must in time regard a man as an implacable enemy.

As a fact, this may be illustrated by the behaviour of a certain herd of elephants which had made its home some eighteen miles south of the Adminstrative Station of Kasama.

This herd is noted as dangerous by hunters for the reason that it has been so much shot at. Not very long ago a white man, resident in the country, who had shot a bull in this herd, nearly lost his life through being charged by a cow after he had fired at the bull. He only saved himself by a fortunate shot when the cow was close to him. The knowledge that a herd of elephants is dangerous may increase the excitement felt by the hunter who ventures amongst them to pick a good bull, but it is a question whether it is worth the risk, when one knows that the sound of his rifle may bring some of the herd upon him.

Elephants, when travelling, move in straight lines, East or West, North or South, to the feeding grounds which attract them at different periods of the year. In some localities where they are plentiful the tracks they have made are like beaten roads, as they are used year after year. As I have said, these tracks will always be in a straight line, only

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deviating slightly to avoid ant-hills and large trees. When a herd is upon the move they do not always keep the same track, but may move in parallel lines some distance from each other, the number of tracks depending upon whether the herd is a large or small one. The bulls do not travel with the cows or calves, but follow a track of their own well on the outside of the herd. Now and again these bulls will leave the track they are following to mingle with the herd, and, being satisfied that all is well, will diverge sometimes several miles to right or left of the herd, according to which way the wind blows. Not being endowed with good eyesight, elephants trust to their sense of smell to warn them of danger, this sense being the paramount one in the elephant. They are so accustomed to the sound made by themselves and other elephants in pulling down trees and breaking branches, that often even a noisy footfall of a man approaching them will be disregarded. On the other hand the slightest scent of an approaching human being will startle them at once and probably drive them into flight. In spite of his strength and size the elephant is really a very timid animal, and all he asks is to be left to feed in peace and solitude. Once disturbed, however, by being fired at, he, as an individual, never forgets it, especially if he has been wounded, and will travel many miles on end before he will

stop and rest. This course of action a herd also will pursue if badly frightened.

On one occasion a cow, which had been badly wounded, was found dead the following day, sixty miles from where she had been fired at. I, myself, have followed a wounded elephant for many days and then had to give up the chase, the elephant never seeming to stop or rest during that time. When elephants that have been wounded start travelling they seem to have the desire of putting as many miles as possible between themselves and the place where they have been wounded or alarmed; they do not stop to feed, but pull down occasional branches on their line of retreat, now and again crossing a river or marsh where they can get water.

The African elephant has strong predilections as to the locality which is suitable as a safe retreat for the cows to bring forth and rear their calves. In the territory to which I am referring more particularly, these favoured nurseries are some very dense sapling woods rendered almost impenetrable, except by elephants, by innumerable creepers; they are situated close to Lake Bangweolo, and in a portion of the higher ground in the north of the big Mofwe Marsh, towards the Congo border, which is covered by thick bush with creepers and patches of thorn. This latter nursery is never disturbed as it is included in the Big Game Reserve. Other

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parts of the territory, which have smaller herds, have their nurseries, but these are not so typical. In the larger nurseries the cows with young seem to remain most of the time in the one locality, never moving far away. The bulls of these herds often go for long excursions, returning at irregular intervals to see how the mothers and babies are getting on. Another such nursery exists upon the lonely Chimpili Hills, towards the centre of the territory, and is seldom disturbed by hunters owing to the dangerous temper the herd shows when disturbed. This herd contains many large bulls, probably the biggest tuskers in the territory. One of these bulls has been sighted several times and carries tusks of probably over 100 lb. each. Cow elephants are said to carry their young fourteen months and to produce two in five years, which cannot be said to be a very rapid increase. I am unable to say at what age they stop breeding, possibly between thirty and forty years old.

At the time of year when the Masuko plum is ripe, a fruit of which elephants are passionately fond, they will travel all over the country to get and eat it. This plum, when not ripe, is very bitter and stringent, having a large proportion of gallic acid in its composition. When fully ripe the flesh is bright yellow and exceedingly sweet and juicy. The elephants, knowing that only the ripe plums

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fall, do not pull down these trees for their fruit but shake them, and then pick up the fallen fruit and eat it with much satisfaction. These plums ripen towards the end of the year, at the commencement of the rains, and this is the best time for the hunter who wants to get an elephant, for not only are the herds scattered over the country then, but each elephant in a wood where these trees grow will often be so busily occupied feeding as to be oblivious to all sense of danger. There is another great advantage in following elephants at this time of the year: owing to the soft nature of the ground it is very easy to track them and to obtain measurements of the foot, which measurements give an indication of the size, not only of the elephant itself, but often, if a bull, of the tusks which it carries. The older a large bull elephant is, the greater is the size of its foot, and if it is carrying heavy tusks, it betrays the fact to the accomplished spoorer by the depth of the impressions of its forefeet, the weight of the tusks causing it to press heavily as it walks. In every case the size of the forefoot is taken when examining the spoor of elephants, and it is only the big ones which are picked out as being worth following. Occasionally it happens that a very large footmark may be made by a tuskless bull, known in the native language as "Tondo." A native elephant guide, however, can soon tell

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that it belongs to a tuskless bull by following the track for a short distance and examining the droppings of such an animal. All elephants are fond of stripping the bark off some trees; this they do by inserting the tusks between the trunk of the trees and wedging off the bark; they then seize with their trunk the portion which they have wedged off the parent stem and pull at it, stripping off a piece of bark, which may be many feet in length. This they chew and swallow. All elephants which have tusks eat this bark, the undigested portions being found in their droppings. The male that has no tusks is unable to add these strips of bark to his diet, and therefore his droppings are free from the undigested parts which are typical of the droppings of the tuskered males. When the tracker has inspected droppings which are obviously of a large male, and finds no bark, he is able to say that such droppings have been left by a tuskless bull, which therefore is of no value to follow.

Whether it is due to constant pursuit, or whether it is that the big bulls are gradually taking refuge in the Game Reserve where they are never disturbed, it is a fact that it is getting more difficult to shoot bulls with large tusks. The sportsman out upon a trip must be satisfied if he is successful in shooting the two bulls which are allowed upon the Game licence, and if the aggregate of the

ivory got from these two reaches 60 lb. If he is in luck and happens to strike the spoor of a big bull and succeeds in shooting it, he may possibly obtain tusks of over 40 lb. each, but such tuskers are not plentiful. The first elephant which I ever saw and fired at had such tusks, and the following is an account of the episode.

I was anxious to get an elephant and sent the natives out in many directions to try to locate for me some good bull which I could follow. One of these natives returned, saying that two bulls had taken up their residence close to a village some forty miles away, and that they had been seen by the villagers many times crossing the stream to enter a Chipia where the grass was twelve feet high, in which they passed the day, leaving it at night to visit the part of the woodland where they were feeding upon the wild fruits. This man brought me two sticks which he said represented the length of the forefeet respectively of the two bulls. These sticks measured by a tape line were 19 and 23 inches, and if they represented approximately the length of the elephants' feet, either elephant was worth following as being the bearer of good-sized tusks. The method these natives adopt of measuring the footprints of elephants is to lay a stick over their track, and measuring inside the impression left by the foot in the ground from the heel to the toe, break off

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the stick at the exact measurement. Occasionally, where the ground has been slippery, a native will bring a stick showing an enormous length of foot, and if one did not know his little ways the sportsman might think the native was inducing him to go upon the track of a mammoth which up to now had escaped extinction. In this case, however, when I arrived in the village on the afternoon of the second day of travel, I was able to verify these measurements for myself and found that they were exact. To my satisfaction, also, the villagers told me that the elephants were still in the Chipia, having been seen that morning crossing the stream, but as it was too late in the afternoon when I arrived to try to locate them amongst the grass, I decided to wait until the following morning. In the early morning a sportsman has always the best chance of coming up to an elephant as there is no wind till seven o'clock a.m., and as the elephant, being well fed, will often be dozing quietly under some tree.

At daybreak, under the guidance of one of the villagers, I went to that part of the stream where the elephants had crossed that morning. I took up the track of the biggest elephant, which led into some grass ten or twelve feet high. This grassgrown slope on the side of the river was about half a mile long and some 500 yards deep, rising gradually to the forest beyond. The greatest part

of it was covered with this enormously tall grass, so thick and dense that the only track through it was the elephant paths, and the view obtained from the top of an occasional ant-hill was very limited. There were many places where the grass had been trampled down and flattened by the side of anthills where they had slept. Some of these sleepingplaces were several days old. There was no sign of either of the elephants in the grass, and under the guidance of my tracker I followed up the recent spoor of the larger of the two elephants, this taking us towards the woodland where the grass, though much tangled, was shorter and I was able to see over the top of it. Still there was no sign of the elephants, so I sent one of the gun-carriers up a tree, and scarcely had he reached the first branch when he rapidly descended, saying that he had seen the big elephant standing amongst the trees just inside the woods. I immediately made a detour to try to get behind him as the wind was beginning to blow from us to him. When we reached the woodland we heard him, although we could not see him. The place where he was standing was very thickly grown with saplings, and as he moved one of these would break. The sound of these breakages showed that he was returning to the tall grass, and I hurriedly, but quietly, left the woodland and climbed an ant-hill which would give me a good view of the edge of the

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wood some forty yards away. I had scarcely taken up my position on this when I had a most impressive view of my first elephant as he came slowly out of the wood, swinging his big trunk and following a course which would lead him right up to the ant-hill upon which I was standing with my .500 Winchester rifle loaded with solid bullets. As he approached slowly towards me my second gun-bearer, who was of little use at the best of times, being an absolute fool, and a drunken one at that whenever he had an opportunity of getting beer, suddenly broke a dead branch, causing the elephant to halt and raise his ears suspiciously, while he felt the air with his trunk for the scent of an enemy. To my disappointment he turned round and moved slowly away from me so that I had not a fair opportunity of giving him a fatal shot. Looking back upon this episode, now that I know more about elephant shooting, I am aware that I ought to have taken a shot at him in his ribs as he turned, on the chance of reaching his heart.

However, to resume the story; as he was moving slowly out of the way and beyond earshot I was able to tell the gun-bearer what I thought of him in a few effective words. The only explanation he could give of his carelessness was that he wanted to see the elephant too, and a dead branch was in his way and that he did not mean to break it. By this

time the elephant had gone into some very high grass and I could only see the ridge of his back, the top of his head and his trunk as he occasionally raised it. He was then about 100 yards from the ant-hill on which I was standing. After moving about restlessly in this grass, he took up a position under a tree and stood quietly, as he had evidently made up his mind that there was no danger to be feared. I then left my ant-hill and made my way cautiously under cover to another close to him. On climbing this ant-hill, I saw him on the other side standing almost hidden in the grass with his head towards me, about twenty-five yards away. He was moving his head slowly up and down. I took a shot for his brain-pan reached by the hollow in his forehead, but as I fired he lowered his head and the shot hit him in the big bony boss of his head. He at once dashed off, giving me but one view of his head and trunk in the tall grass some distance away as he stopped for a second to throw it up before finally disappearing from my sight. Though I followed that elephant for many days I never saw him again, nor did I see any signs of his companion who, the natives subsequently told me, had been standing a considerable distance away, and had gone off full tilt when he heard the sound of the gun. A fortnight later another white official came upon the spoor of these elephants and followed

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their tracks for six days, at the end of that time being lucky to shoot them both as they stood close together. The larger bull had tusks of 45 lb. each, and in his head was embedded my bullet. The smaller elephant had tusks of 30 lb. each and numerous bullets in its body which had been fired at it by many hunters, so it is no wonder the poor beast took to instant flight upon hearing my shot at its companion.

Some little time after this a local chief brought in word that there was a herd of elephants feeding close to his village, and that he had seen one good bull with his own eyes. Being keen upon killing my first elephant, and made more so by my regret at having lost the big bull as described in the last episode, I started out at once under the guidance of the chief for the wood where he had seen these elephants the night before, ten miles away from where I was staying. On taking up the spoor the next morning I found that the elephants had been feeding for at least two or three days in the woods on both sides of a small stream which ran through marshy ground. Some of the branches they had pulled down had been done as recently as sunrise that morning, but there were no signs of the elephants themselves. The herd did not appear to be a very large one, but the track showed that it contained two fair-sized and one large bull. On

following the track of the largest bull for some distance we found it was a tuskless bull for the reason that I have already given, but as this track accompanied the track of two other bulls it did not make much difference to us. With my caravan of porters carrying the necessary provisions, tent and bed, I followed these tracks the whole day without getting a sight of the elephants. At sundown we reached the neighbourhood of a small village, close to a very large Chipia wood in which elephants generally made their home. My suggestion to pitch camp close to a stream where the elephant tracks had crossed was negatived by my gunbearer, who said that it would be better to go to the village and find out from the inhabitants if they had seen anything of the elephants. This we did, arriving at the village at sundown to the great delight of the native carriers who hate sleeping in the open, preferring the warmth and gossip of a native village, even when accompanied by numerous flies, fleas and ticks, which last are a great pest and are the carrier of the parasite of remittent or tick fever. All native villages are full of these, and for this reason it is never safe for a European who has not already had the fever, to make his camp or pitch his tent close to one of these villages. The villagers, however, had not seen anything of the elephants.

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The following morning, on leaving the village to pick up the tracks again, we found that the three bulls had crossed a path leading to the village and had actually fed in some deserted gardens within a quarter mile of where my tent was pitched. We followed these tracks to where they led on to a plain, and from the plain into the Chipia wood. As it was possible I might have a long chase before I made up to them, I sat down and had a hurried breakfast on the plain just outside the wood. This was probably a mistake on my part, for it is no more possible to keep natives than monkeys from chattering, and on entering the wood I found that three elephants had been sleeping on the side of anthills quite close to the edge of the wood, but had gone off, probably having heard my men talking. This I judged to be the case, because they were making small detours instead of making straight for the depths of the wood, as they would have done had they not been disturbed. During the night there had been a shower, and the ground being soft the impressions were easy to follow, the track of the largest bull being between those of his smaller companions. Not only were they making these detours, but where there were small openings in the bush, which was pretty thick, they stopped, evidently getting occasional scent of us as we followed; the wind being fitful and constantly changing its

direction, though at no time blowing strongly, was sufficient to warn them that we were on their track. On the advice of an elephant tracker, whom I had employed for this occasion, we sat down and rested so as to give the elephants an opportunity of stopping, which they would do as soon as they had lost our scent. This piece of advice was the one sensible thing on the part of the tracker, for by his subsequent behaviour I certainly lost a chance of getting a big bull which I would otherwise have done, and this will be shown as the story progresses.

On again taking up the spoor, we found that the three bulls had turned sharply to the left, making down wind, which by now was blowing somewhat stronger. We could see nothing of them as we were now in the thickest of the bush, and the small trees were very dense. We made a detour ourselves to avoid alarming them by following down wind, and tried to strike their path of retreat some distance ahead. We had scarcely approached the probable line of their path when trumpetings and the loud crashing of bushes showed that they had got our wind and gone off. We could still see nothing of them. I ran forward rapidly, followed by my gun-bearers, the elephant tracker leading the way, keeping a parallel line to the noise of the crashing bushes. Some two hundred yards ahead we came to a clearer space, and there on the other side



H.R.H. the Duchess of Aosta and the Bull Elephant shot by her near Kasama.

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were several cow elephants slowly walking out of the bush and making straight across in front of us. They did not seem at all frightened, evidently having lost the scent which had first disturbed them. I took up my position behind a bush at a point where they would pass within some thirty yards if they still came on towards me. One after the other they emerged from the bush into this clearing, cows and calves of all ages, walking one behind the other, just like a circus procession on the march. The rear was brought up by two good-sized tuskers with the huge tuskless bull just in front of them. I had scarcely got my rifle ready for a shot when this fool of an elephant tracker suddenly made a dash from the bush behind which I was standing, with a spare rifle he was carrying, and ran towards a bush within a few yards from where the elephants were passing. As he ran he called for me to follow. Though not seeing the necessity of this I was preparing to do so when one of the big cows sighted us, and throwing up its trunk gave warning, at which they all broke away back into the bush, the three bulls turning sharp round on their tracks, not giving me the chance of one shot. As the sound of their branch-breaking retreat died away in the distance, I turned to the tracker and asked him why he had not stood still with me instead of rushing forward and spoiling what would have been an excellent

chance of getting either one or both the tusker bulls. His reply was a most foolish one. He said, "I thought you were going to shoot a cow, and if you had done so I would have got into trouble from the Government and you as well." He was unaware that the recent change in the game regulations allowed the shooting of cows who carried tusks of over 11 lb. each. I was exceedingly angry with him, for it was presumption on his part to question my knowledge of the game laws, and by his idiotic act in running forward he had thoroughly scattered the elephants throughout the wood. However, there was nothing for it now but to pick up the spoor and follow it till we could cut out one or other of the tuskered bulls and get a chance of shooting it.

After wandering about this wood, here and there, yet seeing nothing of the elephants who seemed to have broken up and to be going in all sorts of directions, the tracks crossing and recrossing one another in a most perplexing way, I got a sight about eleven o'clock of a large bull, not very far away, busily engaged in pulling down the branches of a Masuko plum tree. These plums are bright yellow, and much like a large ripe gooseberry in consistence and flavour. I got within twenty yards of him, but even as close as I was, I could see nothing except his large head, as the thick bush hid his body and there

was not even a very clear view of his head. I wanted to take a shot at his ear, but was stupid enough to desist on the advice of the aforesaid elephant tracker, who seemed to be there only for the purpose of ruining my chances of a shot. He whispered to me that as we could not see its body we ought to manœuvre to try and make certain of getting more than one shot in. This manœuvring as we went through the thick dry grass was evidently overheard by the elephant, who slowly moved off into the bush, giving me one view of his tail and hind legs, and this was the last I saw of him. A small consolation I got from eating what the elephant had left of the plums. I was getting fairly dispirited with these fruitless attempts to shoot a tuskered bull, and on following the spoor of the plum-eating bull my annoyance was further increased by hearing him go crashing away through the bush with several more of the herd; I had hoped to get up to him, as one of my men had sighted him moving slowly through the bush away upon our left, but my hopes were dashed once more.

It was now twelve o'clock, the sun well overhead, and very hot and stuffy pushing our way through the bush. There was also the suggestion of a thunderstorm ready for us some time during the course of the afternoon. It became a question whether

to follow the spoor, or to pitch camp and take it up on the following day. My fool of a tracker, seeing how annoyed I was, thought that I would look upon him with more favour if he could lead me up to an elephant before the sun went down upon my wrath, and therefore encouraged me to follow up the spoor. By this time I had lost sight of the rest of my caravan, who had been following far behind, including the "boys" who were carrying some food, but I hoped they might see my footmarks on the soft ground and follow the trail of the bull that I followed. This went straight away out of the thick bush towards some open country with patches of woodland, and was joined in its course by the impressions of three other elephants. I followed it till five o'clock, seeing nothing of the animals, which had crossed a stream on the edge of the wood. At this stream I wished to pitch my camp for the night as the sky was much overcast and the rain seemed near, so after I had rested for some time I sent my two gun-bearers to hurry up the porters with my equipment who I hoped were following a mile behind. The gun-bearers came back saying that they had whistled and called and that there was no answer, so there was nothing for it but for us all to return upon our own track, as these natives frequently behave very foolishly when away from the guidance of a white man. I trudged

wearily back along the track I had followed, full of rage and annoyance, but neither saw nor heard a sign of any human being but ourselves. It was now sundown, and the rain was imminent. The only course seemed to make for the village in which I had slept the previous night, where I thought the carriers might have returned when they lost me earlier in the day. I was very cross and hungry, having had nothing to eat since the early morning, and my irritation was increased by the thought of what I might have done had I not had this fool of a tracker. As I got to the edge of the wood close to the plain upon which I had breakfasted in the morning I heard a call which, to my satisfaction, proved to be from my caravan, who were sitting, huddled together, and afraid to move, as they said they had seen elephants passing and repassing at close quarters all the day. I was able to pitch camp close to a small stream, half a mile away from where I found them, just as it got dark and the rain began to come down. Some big camp fires of dried trees made things more cheerful, and my cook was able to turn me out a satisfactory meal between eight and nine o'clock. Luckily, there was very little rain during the night, otherwise my carriers, sleeping in the open, would have fared badly, and the next day opened with glorious sunshine.

Not waiting for breakfast I got my cook to put

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some food into a basket and struck off across the plain to reach the spoor which I had left the night before. This I found went straight off without a break. Had I not been afraid of startling the elephants I could have had several chances of shooting buck as they were out feeding in the early morn. I passed close to one very large herd of eland. At the end of a couple of hours of hard walking, the spoor showing no signs of the elephants resting, I sat down and had breakfast, allowing my carriers to make up to me. Where I sat there were many Masuko trees with ripe fruit. My natives were able to eat themselves full of these plums while I breakfasted. After the rest I again took up the spoor, which still went on without a break, crossing plain and woodland, till it led us to a marsh where the elephants had stopped to drink and then crossed. Their tracks on the other side of the marsh went on for several miles, entering some thick woodland with very high grass. Here we hoped we might find the elephants asleep as it was then past midday, and these animals, like all other animals in Africa, dislike moving about during the hot hours when the sun is up. As we carefully pushed our way through the thick grass we found where they had been resting just inside the bush, the grass close to the ant-hills, on which they had been leaning, being much flattened and still carrying their rank smell.

They had gone off, however, the wind being in the direction to give them warning of our approach. We followed their track through the thick bush till it led us again to the edge of the marsh we had already crossed, but a couple of miles higher up; close to where the bull had entered the marsh, a very fine python was lying coiled up in the mud and I almost stepped on to him; my gun-carriers, however, would not allow me to kill him, saying that I should have very bad luck if I did so as this python contained the spirit of a Chief who had died some time before in that district. How they knew this I am unable to say, but I respected their prejudices or their reverence for the dead Chief, and left the python basking in his warm mud. As the tracks led across the marsh there was nothing for it but to plunge along and once more cross through the mud and water. While crossing I had the opportunity of shooting a fine sitatunga bull which was standing further down in the marsh, but was of course unable to do so. On the other side I sat down amongst some shady bushes, and with the help of a pipe loaded with native tobacco, held a council of war with my gun-bearers, carefully leaving out the elephant tracker whose advice and conduct had been so disastrous on the previous day. We had tramped so many hours after these elephants and they seemed to be still going, so it became a ques-

tion whether we should still trudge wearily on behind them or give up the chase and look for others. My councillors decided that if, after following the track for another mile or two, the elephants still showed no signs of stopping, it would be fruitless to go on with the chase which already had been a long stern one. This seemed fairly good advice and I determined to follow it.

We had not proceeded very far when numerous freshly broken uprooted trees showed us that the elephants had lost their alarm of us and had started to feed, so we took up the chase with more hope, keeping a sharp look-out in case they should be standing or feeding close to us. The ground here was high with very little undergrowth, and we could see a long way ahead of us. On getting up to one patch of saplings we found that elephants had been standing there recently, but had gone on in a direction which would lead back to the wood some ten miles away where we had first disturbed them on the previous morning. Rapidly following the spoor, and ever keeping a look-out ahead, we crossed one large portion of open woodland having soft sandy soil, which seemed to have rather tired the elephants as one of them was dragging its feet every now and again, giving us renewed hope of coming up to them before sundown, especially as the wind had now dropped. After leaving the

sandy ground the bushes became more dense, and numerous tall trees kept the sun off, and we had not gone very far before we found that the elephants, which up to now had been moving in one track, had broken up, one track moving to the right, one to the left and so on. This is generally an indication that the elephants who have been travelling wish to stop, to rest or feed. My caravan porters, who were following close behind, were ordered to sit down and wait till sent for, while I, along with my gun-carriers, took up the track of the biggest animal. It was then nearly five o'clock in the afternoon, the declining sun shining straight into our eyes. Right in front of us, no long way off, the sharp crack of a broken branch told us that the elephants were feeding somewhere in the bush. As we stood, trying to locate the exact place from whence the sound came, a bull slowly crossed in front of us, and commenced to break off the branches of a tree. There was no cover or small bush between us and him, so I had to make a circle, taking advantage of such cover of tree trunks as I could. As I came round upon him, I walked almost straight into a huge cow that was feeding upon the branches of an upturned tree. As her tusks appeared to be especially fine ones and over the limit of weight required by the licence, I decided to take her first, for I was in such a mood after my two days'

tramp that it was immaterial to me whether I shot a bull or cow to start with.

By moving slowly from tree trunk to tree trunk I was able to get within fifteen yards of her as she stood right in the open, slowly munching the branches, the sunbeams shining directly into her eyes. Waiting a moment or two till her head was steady I got one shot into her left ear from my .500 Winchester, upon which she crashed down upon her left side stone dead, and thus I shot my first elephant. At the sound of the shot, the bull which had been standing beyond some trees that he had uprooted rushed round in front of the dead cow, then wheeled off full tilt into the thick bush, followed by the other elephants. I could have risked wounding him with a bullet in his side as he turned to make off, but had no wish then to spend any more days in following elephants' spoor, for it would have been only by a lucky chance that I could have shot him dead at the angle he presented.

I had my tent pitched inside of a zareba of bushes close to where the elephant lay, just as the sun disappeared. We were all parched with thirst, and anxious for water. By sending a man up one of the highest trees we were able to locate the marsh a considerable distance away. As a matter of fact, by the time the detachment of water-carriers returned it was after nine o'clock, the journey to and

from the water having taken three hours. This water was full of vegetable refuse, and we all suffered severely through drinking it without first boiling it.

The night was spent by us all resting, as every one was very tired after the long tramps we had had. I spent the following day under the shade of a tree with a novel, while every native, including a detachment from the village twelve miles away, who had heard the news from the water-carriers the previous evening, was engaged each trying to grab the largest share of meat. The process of cutting up a dead elephant is very unpleasant as the natives slice and hack portions of meat from the carcase. The heart of an elephant is the perquisite of the tracker, but in this case I disregarded the tracker and gave it to my favourite gun-carrier. The eating of the heart is supposed to confer upon the eater some of the virtues, such as strength and endurance, possessed by the elephant. The night following the cutting up of the elephant all my carriers utilized in making biltong of the flesh. This they do by means of slow fires over which chips of the meat are suspended, or stretched. When a native is occupied in making biltong he does not sleep but watches the meat, talking to his companions the whole night through, while every now and again he and they slice off a portion which they

eat. Needless to say, after a night like this they are nearly always heavy and sluggish and suffer from bad headaches. My cure for such conditions was invariably a large dose of Epsom salts which I always carry, and is an efficacious remedy for headaches caused by debauches of over-eating. On the third day I decided to return home to my station. As my tent was being struck and the loads packed for transport, each native tying bundles of this half-cured meat on to the top of his load, I took a stroll to where the elephant had been cut up. Nothing was left of her but a bare skull from which the tusks had been removed, the backbone, and part of the hipbone, all the other bones having been broken up by the natives with their axes for the marrow. It was a messy scene and I was glad to turn my back upon it, and strike off to the fresh woodland under the guidance of the Chief, who rejoiced in the name of Shimbalamba, and who had followed me the whole time. Being in his own country he was able to take us in a bee line home. This, after walking all day, I reached at six o'clock that night, the distance measured by my pedometer, being 33 miles. I was very glad to get to my house as the long trampings had culminated in giving me two large blisters, both of which had broken, and my socks, rubbing the raw places as I walked, made the last few miles slow and painful ones.

I was glad to find on weighing them that the tusks were over the 11 lb. in weight which, as I have said, is the minimum allowed for a cow. Under this weight the tusks are confiscated and the sportsman fined, unless the animal has been shot in selfdefence, in which case the onus of proof would be upon the sportsman and not upon the prosecution. I do not regard this regulation, making 11 lb. the limit for cows, as fair for this territory. There are very few cow elephants which carry tusks of this weight, the mean average being 8 or 9 lb. which is quite a good size for a cow. The alteration in the licence permitting cows to be shot was framed for the purpose of keeping down numbers in districts where they caused much damage to the crops of villagers and farmers. As cows having tusks of 11 lb. or over are very difficult to find, this alteration in the regulations has defeated itself, for no one will venture to risk confiscation of the tusks and being fined.

Now for the story of my last elephant, which in every way is more interesting and certainly ended up in a more exciting manner than the story I have just told of how I shot my first. Some of us had been gathered together to celebrate the Christmas of 1909 when word was brought in by Chief Shimbalamba that a large herd of elephants was feeding in his district twenty-two miles from where we were.

Only four days of the year were left to us on our licences, these special game licences ending on the last of the year. My friend, Mr. Osborne, who has shot many elephants, decided that it would form a pleasant excursion for us both to go out together and see what we could do in the way of filling our licences. The first day we pitched our tents amongst some shady trees, close to the village of Chief Shimbalamba. The next afternoon we reached a small stream close to the piece of woodland where the elephants had been reported feeding for two or three days. While our camp was being pitched Mr. Osborne sent out his noted elephant tracker, called Shongosi, a man paramount in his profession, and much respected by all the natives. We had barely finished our lunch when word was brought to us by a native who had gone out with this Shongosi that there was fresh spoor of that morning crossing the mail road to Chinsali Station, our tents being pitched close to the road. Mr. Osborne at once jumped on his bicycle and went off, followed by his gun-bearers running behind, and that was the last I saw of him till I got back into camp at eight o'clock that night. With as much speed as I could make under the broiling sun, with the perspiration running down my back, and dropping from the end of my nose, I at length reached a place where the spoor of a very large bull crossed

the road. I had no tracker with me on this occasion, and only my favourite gun-bearer and another man carrying a service ·303; my head gun-bearer would never allow any other man to carry the Winchester after I had dropped the cow elephant stone dead with it; he looked upon it somewhat in the light of a very powerful god.

The bull spoor led to a very damp open space of ground which had been trampled about by the herd for two or three days, and the tracks of all these elephants wandering in and out of one another made it a puzzle of no small difficulty to pick out the fresh track of a bull and follow him. They had also demolished numbers of fruit trees, which were lying piled on top of one another just as if a tornado had passed. After wasting much time on this meadow, and amongst the fallen trees, we abandoned this method of picking out the spoor and adopted casting for it by making large circles beyond. Our third cast was successful and we struck the fresh spoor of not one, but three bulls, leading from the fallen trees to the depths of the wood. The grounds being soft, as I have said, even in the woodland, we were able to follow the track rapidly. After going some distance we observed the bootmarks of my friend with the footmarks of two of his gun-carriers, showing that they also had struck this spoor. We had arranged, the

day before, that if we came up to a bull together we should toss who should have the first shot; but as it had fallen out, he had so much start of me that I expected every moment to hear the sound of his rifle ahead of me. There was, therefore, nothing else to be done but follow on his tracks and if possible come up to him before he could reach the elephants we were both hunting.

We were now in a rather open woodland, giving us a fairly good view of the country ahead, though occasionally we had to go through some thick bush into which the tracks of the elephants led. I knew that we need not expect to see any elephants or I would have heard Mr. Osborne's rifle already. After these tracks had gone up the hill, almost to the highest point of the wood, they suddenly turned and made eastwards, going down towards a river which ran some miles away. From this point I had a splendid view of the surrounding country for many miles away, the hills rising one above the other, each covered with green trees to its summit, a country which, from all time, has been a favourite resort of elephants, and the chances were that this herd was making now for the hills which I could see some twenty miles away beyond the river. Shortly after this I had to take shelter under some trees from a sudden heavy shower of rain. Luckily my second gun-bearer was carry-

ing my waterproof, without which one never moves far at this season of the year. There being no wind, I took the opportunity of indulging in a pipe, which I had been wanting to do for an hour or two past, but was unable in case the scent of the smoke should reach the elephants, who, for all I knew, might have been still somewhere in the vicinity. When the rain ceased the sun came out, and I am sure the warmth was very grateful to my gun-carriers who had been shivering. After again following the spoor for half a mile we came upon the very comforting sight of three natives, one carrying rugs and two with baskets of food. They had been sent out from the camp by my cook to try to find us in case Mr. Osborne and myself should wish to sleep upon the trail, which is frequently done in Africa when following elephants, so as not to lose time. It was now nearly five o'clock, and as in this part of the country the sun sets at six and darkness follows rapidly, without any twilight, there seemed but little chance of getting up to the elephants that night. I was much relieved, when presently I found a stick stuck in the middle of the track with a scrap of paper on which Mr. Osborne had written that he had returned to camp as he thought the elephants had crossed the river, and it was better to leave the chase for the following day. I translated this to my gun-carrier, and we turned west-

ward, making a bee line through the woodland for our camp, which was about eight miles away.

After going some distance we suddenly came upon an immense quantity of fresh spoor made, after the shower of rain, either by the herd we had been following or by another. My gun-carrier said he could hear branches being broken away to the left of us which seemed to show that the elephants were not far away. It was then half-past five o'clock, but in spite of the lateness of the hour I thought there might be a possibility, as the elephants were not far off, of getting a shot and killing one, in which case I could return to camp and triumph over Mr. Osborne who had given up the chase. However, as we were getting into the thick bush in which they were feeding, a circling wind which often follows a rainstorm, carried our scent to them, and they suddenly broke away, so I abandoned my scheme of possible triumph over Mr. Osborne and struck out again for home. After pushing through the wet grass and bushes for a couple of miles, I came to a nice park-like part of the wood, free of undergrowth, with short grass and some fine large trees. Here and there were some ant-hills, and upon one of these, about a yard in circumference, I sat me down for a rest and another pipe while my men, that is to say the two guncarriers and the three who were carrying the bas-

kets and rugs, sat some little distance away. The sun had just gone down and I was inhaling, gratefully, the smoke of a well-burning pipe, when I heard the heavy reports of an express rifle some considerable distance off, in the direction from which we had come; these reports following one another in quick succession. As I sat there listening to the shots I felt very cross, for the tables were turned and I was going back to camp empty-handed, while I knew that Mr. Osborne, good shot as he was, would have succeeded in killing one or two elephants. I was expressing my annoyance to my gun-carriers, my pipe in my hand, when one of them suddenly interrupted my grumbling by gripping my left arm and pointing in front of me, saying, "Look, an elephant"; and there was one solitary big bull lumbering through the trees at a jog-trot, his tusks gleaming white, coming in such a way that he would pass quite close to us. I sat perfectly still, as there was no cover, and elephants do not take notice of objects readily unless moving. When he was some forty yards from us however, he suddenly stopped, raising his trunk and bringing forward his ears, which showed he had seen us. This distance is much too far for a deadly shot, but as he was watching me I had to make the best of my opportunity, so I stood up, and taking careful aim, in the fading light, for the centre of his forehead, gave him a

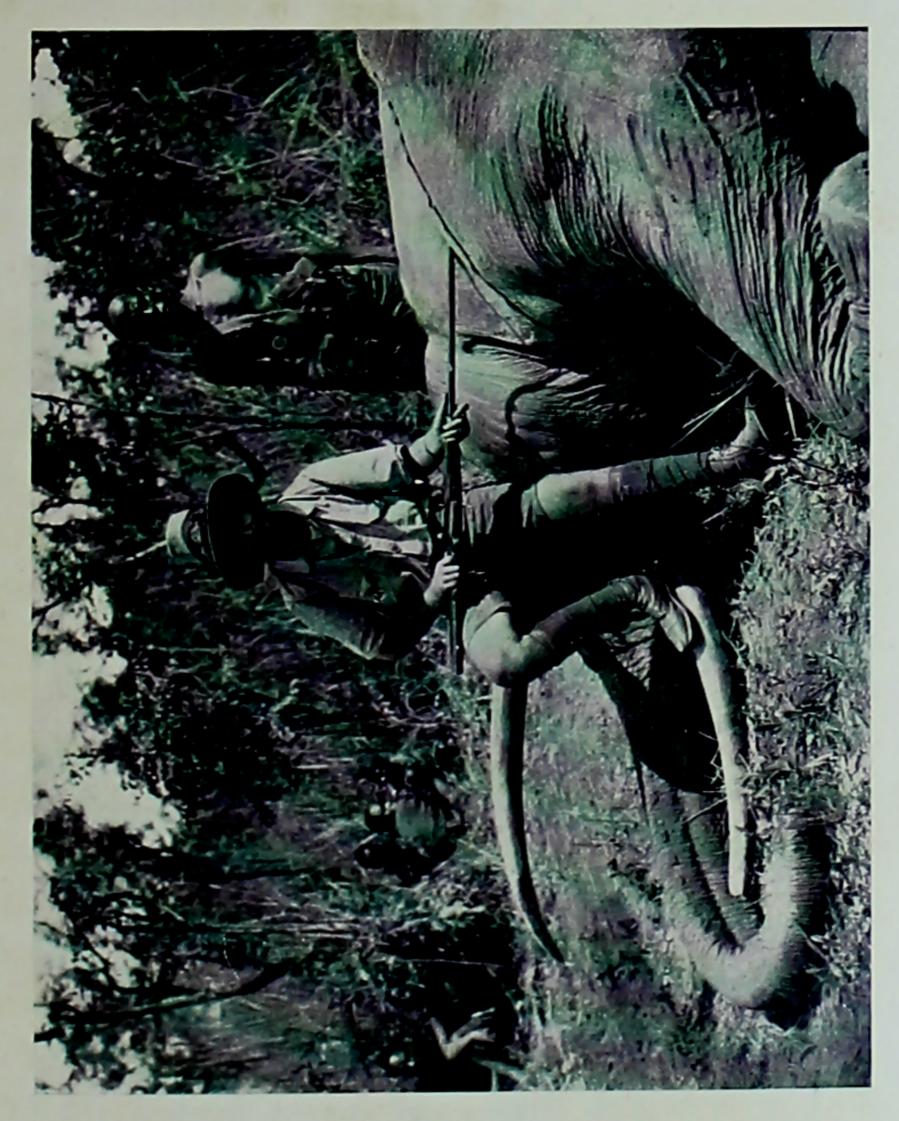
bullet from my Winchester. He staggered, showing the shot had struck, but quickly recovering threw up his trunk and came for me full charge. My head gun-carrier with the .303 stood fast, all the other men making for trees which they rapidly climbed. As he came on to me, I got one shot into his chest, and then, stepping out of his way, got two shots into his left side in rapid succession. He lurched badly, gave a stumble and fell on his chest stone dead, dropping in full charge, his right foreleg out, his left under him, hind leg stretched behind and one under. During the whole time I had not moved more than five yards from the ant-hill upon which I had been sitting, and to show the short space of time the whole occurrence took, I need only say that when I picked up my pipe before going to inspect the elephant I found it was still alight. On examining the animal, upon the back of which my gun-carriers were executing a dance of triumph, I found that my first shot had entered the root of his right tusk, which must have caused him considerable pain. When the elephant was cut up the next day, the two shots fired in his side as he passed me were found both to have entered the heart, causing such destruction as to account for his quick death. This is the episode of the killing of my last elephant.

It was now dark, so I made for camp as fast as I could. Close to where the elephants had been pulling down trees I met a party of my carriers who had come in search of me, and been guided as to my whereabouts by the sound of my rifle. These men had gone off early in the day to buy food for themselves at one of the villages, and on returning to the camp, and hearing that I had gone out after elephants, had immediately set out on the chance that I might need them to make camp fires and build the grass shelters should I sleep out on the trail. They escorted me back, singing the Song of the Dead Elephant. As we approached the camp all the others turned out to welcome me with such shouting, this rejoicing being in anticipation of the splendid feast they would have the following day upon the dead elephant. An hour afterwards I again heard the Elephant's Song and there was more shouting from the camp, who now realized that there were two elephants to be eaten, and Mr. Osborne arrived, preceded by Shongosi, his tracker, carrying the tail of the elephant he had shot.

Over our drinks, which we felt we had thoroughly earned, Mr. Osborne told me the story of his doings. After having stuck the note, informing me that he had returned to camp, on the stick in the middle of the track, he had turned homewards when he also had come upon the fresh spoor made

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after the rain, and decided to have a look at the elephants, as I had thought of doing. It then appeared that he was close to them when they were startled by my scent and broke away through the bush. They did not go far, however, and he followed them and watched them beginning to feed, which they did in a long line in some open woodland, there being nearly a hundred of them. He then had the nerve-thrilling experience of going amongst all these elephants, examining each in turn at close quarters, to pick out a good bull to shoot. Any moment he might have been discovered by one or other of them, and he had to exercise the greatest caution, moving silently and watching the direction of the wind. Finally he got alongside of a bull having fair-sized tusks, which dropped to his first shot, wounded, and he had to fire several shots into it before it finally died. It was these shots that I heard as I sat smoking. The herd at once broke up, charging away in all directions, the bull which I had shot being the only animal to come in mine. The luck of this was more evident when Mr. Osborne told me that there were only those two fair-sized bulls in the herd, the third bull being a tuskless one. When Mr. Osborne heard my shot he thought that he had sent the whole herd down upon me and that I was busily engaged firing in close defence. Thus ended an interest-



Mr. R. A. Osborne on Flephant shot by him.

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ing and exceedingly satisfactory day for both of us.

The following day we struck camp, and moved up to the woodland where our dead elephants lay a mile apart; we pitched our tents in a beautiful locality, under some shady trees with soft green grass all around us and a stream a short distance away. The rain held off and we had a gloriously bright sunshiny day tempered with cool breezes. While we ourselves talked, read, smoked and dozed in the quietness of a camp deserted, except for a few boys who stayed behind to cook or wait upon us, the men were cutting up the dead elephants, the nearest of which was a quarter of a mile away. Towards the afternoon the sylvan beauty of this camp was ruined as the masses of raw meat were brought in and dumped down, and in a short space of time numerous camp fires were sending their acrid smoke up all around us as the meat hung drying over them. The tusks of the two elephants were very much alike and weighed on an average 23 lb. each.

While resting at this camp word was brought to us of the presence of a herd with some good bulls in it about twenty miles away, but we decided that there was not sufficient time before the end of the year to get there with the chance of having to pick out the track and follow up these elephants, so we

returned homewards to our Station, followed by an unsavoury caravan of native porters, each of whom had his load of smelling meat.

I might conclude this chapter upon elephants with a few words as to the places in an elephant's body which should be fired at if it is desired that such shots should be quickly fatal. Of course it must be understood that it is not always easy to get a fair sight on one of these vital spots when an elephant is standing in thick bush. The experienced hunter will wait until he can manœuvre for an opportunity of firing at the vital spot which he prefers, when desiring to kill his elephant stone dead. On the other hand, the tyro, probably excited by seeing the huge bulk of an elephant a few yards away from him, will not realize that there are many shots which do not kill an elephant, and will let fly into some part of the grey body which is so close to him—this even, though he has been carefully instructed beforehand only to fire at one of the three vital spots, the ear, the hollow in the centre of the forehead or the heart. A shot fired at any other than one of these spots, though it may possibly result in an elephant's death after a lapse of time, is a cruel proceeding, entailing suffering upon the animal, and a long pursuit upon the part of the hunter, a chase frequently abandoned as fruitless. A wounded elephant will go on for days, dying perhaps

a couple of weeks after having received the wound.

One such elephant, a small bull, was shot by a friend of mine after it had charged him. In its left shoulder was a huge abscess, and at the bottom of the abscess, embedded in the bone was the cause of the trouble, a solid bullet from a ·303 rifle. As there were no white men using such a weapon to shoot elephants in that district, it was probably fired by a native poacher, more especially as the tusks of this bull only weighed 12 lb. each, a size which would tempt no European hunter to shoot it. This illegal shooting of elephants by natives, who do not care what their size or age is, goes on in spite of the protection of the Administration. The country is so large, the distances so great that it is still possible for illegal shooting of elephants to take place, and I am sorry to say that this breach of the regulations is not always confined to the natives.

When I myself [fire at an elephant I prefer the shot into the ear, which, if well directed, proves instantly fatal. The shot at the forehead is more difficult, for if not fired at the proper angle, it will often not reach the brain but lodge in the bone. For the heart shot a point is taken where the tip of the lobe of the elephant's ear rests behind its shoulder. A shot fired here will generally find the

heart. Though it is possible to kill an elephant with small bore high velocity rifles, yet I consider that it is much more satisfactory to use a larger bore, such as the ·450 or ·500. The shock of impact from these rifles is much greater, and the man who carries one has a greater feeling of confidence, in case he should be charged, in knowing that he has a rifle able to inflict a large amount of damage at short range, such as cannot be given by the smaller bored rifles.

Chapter XXIII

THE LION

THE so-called king of beasts is exceedingly plentiful, and indeed is much too common in many parts of North-East Rhodesia for the comfort and safety of natives. It is only natural that in some parts of the country there are more lions than others where the game is less plentiful. Where the game is there will the lions gather. One would suppose that where lions were easily able to get a plentiful supply of food in the woodland and plains, they would not attack human beings, but that this is not the case may be illustrated by the behaviour of the lion in that portion of the territory which adjoins Lake Mweru. This has always been the home of lions, and not only do they exist in large numbers, but from all time they have been confirmed man-eaters, and this in spite of the fact that this part of the country is full of all species of game, owing to the neighbourhood of the large game reservation. It is possible, also, that the quantity of lions is due to the same reason, as shooting is forbidden. Later

on I refer to this locality when giving my account of the depredations caused by man-eaters.

Though lions are so plentiful, they are not often seen by Europeans, even when hunting the bush assiduously for other game. The natives say that the lions are shy of white men, and that as soon as they see them in the bush they do not wait to be discovered but slink off at once. Even in districts where it is a common thing to see their fresh spoor and where they are seen by natives, a sportsman desirous of adding a lion to his bag may spend many days in searching for them and then be disappointed in not even seeing one, far less getting a shot.

Several white residents in the country, who have lived for years in the districts throughout the territory, and who thus have had a better chance than the sportsman visiting the country for a few months' shooting, have never been able to get near enough to shoot one, though some of them have sighted lions in the distance. On the other hand, the visiting sportsman has been able on some occasions to meet with lions which gave him excellent opportunities, so that on leaving the country he has been able to take with him one or more of the skins of these animals to add to his collection of trophies. Unless the sportsman is actually prepared to devote himself to the getting of a lion, it

THE LION

must always be a matter of chance whether he will meet and be able to shoot one or not. This difficulty of seeing lions is of course increased by the fact that they are on the prowl for food during night hours, when naturally one is unable to see them. Very early in the morning, often long before dawn has broken, they have killed their prey, and having fed and drunk at the nearest stream, are miles away on some hill or thick woodland where they have their lair. Where there are large open plains on which game feed, the sportsman, following the edge of the wood on the look-out for a shot, may often see in the early morning vultures circling over one part of the plain, or slowly dropping to the ground. If he marks the place indicated by the vultures he will find the remains of a buck or zebra which the lion has killed. If he should expect to see the lion close to the kill he will be invariably disappointed. The very fact that the vultures are dropping on the carcase is proof that the lion has departed. In my experience, lions will only be seen in the early morning on the look-out for prey, when they have had a hungry night during which they have been unable to kill, and they are then loth to leave and sleep upon an empty stomach. Sometimes lions search for game on these plains in the late afternoon, but this is not usual. When they venture out as early as this there are two reasons

for it; the one is hunger, and the other is when they have cubs requiring a constant supply of fresh food.

Lions are very intelligent, and are possessed of keen eyesight, and although they use their nose for tracking the fresh spoor, such as of a herd of pigs, it is on their eyesight they principally depend. They know well that all game is on the look-out for them, and that the best chance they have of approaching and killing such game is under the cover of darkness and in the absence of wind which might make their presence known by their scent being carried and thus scaring away their prey. So, when they are forced to hunt their food by daylight, their difficulties are much increased, for not only are they obliged to keep themselves well hidden, but they have to contend with a possibly shifting wind which would at once scare all game from their vicinity. Consequently their procedure, when forced to hunt in the afternoon, varies a good deal from that followed at night, and has been described to me by men who have observed it. This hunting is usually done by a pair of lions, generally a male and female, but in some cases by two males. Supposing it is a case of a male and female with hungry cubs to feed, their method, when they reach the edge of the plain and from the top of a convenient ant-hill have located the zebra or buck feeding, is as follows.

THE LION

The male slowly proceeds up wind under cover till he can get well above the place on which the game marked down are feeding. At the same time the lioness makes for a commanding ant-hill, possibly in the centre of the plain, and as near as she can get to the game without being observed. The lion then proceeds to try to approach the game through cover so that he can get within springing distance. If this is not possible he strolls on to the plain and crosses the wind, which brings his scent to the feeding animals. They at once throw up their heads and are upon the alert. As he approaches slowly they gradually move off, ever keeping a vigilant eye towards the place whence his scent comes. His endeavour is not to scare them but to keep them moving down the plain to where the lioness is waiting, and he will manœuvre so as to keep them slowly moving down wind in the direction he wishes them to follow. If they show a tendency to leave the plain on one side or the other, he will rapidly run forward and give some deep grunts, thinking that by this device they may imagine there is more than one lion on their track, when the game will instinctively turn away and keep towards the centre of the plain where they think they will be safest. This is what he wants them to do, and he will continue to cross and recross the wind slowly until he hears the sharp roar the lioness

makes when she springs, followed by the commotion of the buck or zebra tearing away, denoting that she has made her attack, when he will rejoin her at full speed, and if she has been successful will help her in the killing of her struggling prey. If, on the other hand, the animals break away, not giving the opportunity for the lioness to catch one, or if she, as sometimes happens, misses her spring, they will sulkily make off to repeat the same process upon some other part of this plain, or another.

When villages are near a plain where hungry lions have hungry cubs to feed, disappointment like this may lead the lions to make a raid upon the nearest village with the object of killing a native. When this happens, the lions find it such an easy manner of obtaining food that they not only will continue to remain man-eaters during the time of the rearing of the cubs, but frequently will bring up their cubs to become man-eaters as well.

The ordinary time at which the lion starts upon its hunting expedition is between the hours of 7 p.m. and 1 a.m. When a lion has succeeded in killing a buck, he will carry or drag it close to where there is water if he can, for their habit is to drink fresh water frequently while they are eating the carcase, the salt of the blood presumably making them thirsty. If there is no water quite near they will leave the carcase and go off to the water, and then,

if still hungry, return to complete their meal; but as a rule, when water is distant they prefer to eat as much as they can before they go for a drink, and will not return to the carcase, knowing that as soon as they leave it other animals, such as the hyena, hunting dog or jackal, will make short work of what remains. For this reason it is generally useless for a sportsman to take up his position near a half-eaten carcase with the expectation of seeing the lion return to complete his meal. A fullgrown lion will eat nearly 70 lb. of meat for one meal. After a good meal they may be content to wait two days before feeding again. The lion is not at all particular as to what he eats, and if he finds carrion which hyenas have failed to discover he will be quite content to make his meal off it. The natives say that when a lion is very hungry and unable to kill buck or zebra, he will go down to the shallow pools and eat the frogs, and even eat grass.

Some years ago a lion, which had been wounded, was reported by the natives of a village in the Luango Valley, to be living in their gardens close to their huts, where it took the chickens, and was even digging up and eating cassava roots. It was shot at once without trouble and was found to be a mere skeleton, having been disabled from catching game by a wound it had got from a rifle bullet a week before.

Lions have also been seen eating the ripe Masuko plums from the ground, which they probably do for the sugar they contain. Some years ago I was camping at a village close to the Kalangwesi River, when the natives showed me some grass baskets which had been full of monkey nuts and which had been hung some ten feet above the ground upon a branch of a tree in the middle of the village so as to be out of the way of the rats. A lion had pulled several of the baskets down and eaten much of their contents; his claw marks were upon the tree trunk, and from the size of his pads upon the ground it was seen to be a full-grown lion. In this case, he may perhaps have been attracted to pull down the baskets by curiosity, and in tearing open the baskets with his teeth may have eaten some of the nuts, and finding them sweet have proceeded to make a meal of them.

As I have said, the hunter who wishes to shoot a lion must not only be prepared to devote time to this one object, but also to bear disappointment. Sometimes, when the ground is soft, it may be possible to spoor a lion from where he has killed to where he has gone to his lair. This spooring, however, is very tedious and in the majority of cases highly unsatisfactory. The lion, in common with other cats, is not fond of getting his feet wet, and in addition, walking over damp ground is

tiring and difficult, for the balls of his feet cause him to slip, entailing frequent use of his claws to give him a purchase on the slippery ground. If, then, the spoor is picked up on soft ground the tracker must be prepared for the lion to leave it at the first opportunity for high ground, which is frequently hard and grass covered. Here it becomes almost impossible to follow the spoor, for though a full-grown lion is fairly heavy, the pads leave so little trace, even on sand, that it is very rarely they can be tracked home. In addition a lion soon becomes aware that he is followed and will keep such a sharp look-out, as he steals off through the bush, that more often than not it is impossible to get a sight of him.

In North-East Rhodesia where there are neither mules or horses, all lion hunting must be done on foot, and in my opinion it is much more exciting and dangerous than in other parts of the country, where a man, mounted on a horse, is able to chase a lion on an open plain and take a shot from a distance that gives him sufficient time to make off before the lion can reach and charge him. Also, in North East Rhodesia the sportsman is only accompanied by his natives, and he has to make pretty sure of his shot if the lion is at close quarters, for he may be quite certain that on the first sign of danger he will be left alone, the natives having

taken flight or climbed trees, and possibly the first man to beat this retreat will be the one who is carying the spare rifle.

It was due to such an occurrence as this that Mr. Johnson, an official, lost his life some years back. He had gone out upon a plain in search of game accompanied by some of his native police armed with rifles. The party had not gone far, when, rounding a corner of the wood, they saw a male water-buck which Mr. Johnson dropped with his first shot. Immediately four lions sprang out of the wood on the fallen water-buck and commenced tearing at it. Mr. Johnson then started firing at the lions, and ordered his policemen to shoot at them as well, at once disabling three of them, the fourth making off into the woods with a portion of the water-buck. Thinking the three lions were dead, Mr. Johnson with his gun-bearer walked up to where they lay, when a lioness lying wounded on the ground suddenly jumped up and sprang upon the gun-bearer, pulling him down and commencing to maul him. Mr. Johnson went forward to rescue the man, but his rifle, which only carried a single cartridge, refused to act, and the lioness, leaving the gun-bearer, sprang towards him. With the rifle still in his hand, he then made for a tree, but was only able to pull himself up a short distance when the lioness came up to the tree and pulled him down by his foot.

By this time all the other natives had thrown away their guns and were up the trees looking on, and though called upon by Mr. Johnson to come to his assistance they refused to move. The gunbearer, who subsequently recovered from his wounds, stated that while the lioness was on the top of his master the latter, to save himself from mauling, got his left hand in the mouth of the lioness and was twisting her tongue, while with his right hand he was hammering her upon the nose with his clenched fist. The gun-bearer, though badly mauled, crawled along the ground to where Mr. Johnson's rifle lay, his own being empty, when he recocked it and pressed the trigger, aiming at the head of the lioness. On this occasion the cartridge went off and the animal was shot dead. The cowardly natives, seeing there was no more danger, then condescended to come down, and carried the two wounded men into a Mission Station some miles away, where the gun-bearer recovered; unfortunately Mr. Johnson died from blood-poisoning, said to be caused by an overlooked claw mark behind his knee.

Just before I left to come home, a native hunter was brought in to me covered from head to foot with lion bites and scratches got in somewhat the same way. He had gone out into the woodland after buck with one companion, he himself carrying a

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·303 rifle. This was in the early morning, about eight miles from a village. He had just shot a roan calf when a lioness sprang out upon the carcase. The native hunter, being braver than usual, instead of beating a retreat and leaving the lioness in undisturbed possession of the meat, fired at her, the bullet hitting her in her lower jaw. She immediately turned to come for him, when he fired at her a second time, hitting her upon her right shoulder. She then thought better of continuing the attack and slunk off for a low ant-hill, up which she climbed and started rolling about in pain. Thinking that she was mortally wounded, the hunter and his friend left her to call up the natives of the village, informing them that he had shot a roan antelope and a lioness; he was, of course, exceedingly proud of his prowess, as the natives look upon any man who kills a lion as being little less than an angel. When our hunter, with his native following, returned to the place of his conflict, nothing was left of the baby roan but some skin and hoofs, another lion having seized the opportunity to make a meal off it. On visiting the ant-hill, thinking that at least he would be able to show the lioness, only pools of blood showed where she had been. Being thoroughly annoyed by this time the hunter followed up the blood trail of the wounded lioness, and bravely

entered a patch of grass. Before he had time to fire he was down upon his back with the lioness on top of him, clawing and biting, but luckily for him, the broken jaw-bone prevented her from inflicting as much damage with her teeth as she would otherwise have done. His friend, with much courage, dashed in to help the fallen man, although he was only armed with a spear. Before he could render any assistance, however, the lioness knocked him out with a couple of body blows with her paw on his chest and stomach. Then, fortunately for them both, the crowd of natives rushed in with their spears and soon made an end of the lioness; in fact from the appearance of her skin that I saw afterwards, before she was finally killed she must have resembled a huge pincushion, the spear shafts bristling from her body in all directions. They then carried the two wounded heroes and the body of the lioness into the village, bringing all three to the Station of Kasama, some eighteen miles away, on the following afternoon.

When the hunter was brought to me on a native stretcher, he was covered with wounds, blood and dirt from the crown of his head to his ankles, My recollection is that he had ninety wounds, some of them being very large and deep; one in particular had open his left hand from inside the thumb to the wrist, exposing the tendons. To show the

vitality of these natives, I may mention that the injured hunter did not seem to be suffering much from shock, and only complained of the soreness of his wounds, and seemed but little the worse for having been left for nearly thirty hours unwashed and uncared for in a native hut. The first treatment I gave him was a plentiful washing down with hot water and soap to remove the blood and dirt so that I could see where the wounds were. The wounds were dressed and bound up after being well washed with strong carbolic, followed at the end of the week by strong permanganate of potash solution, after which they healed rapidly, all suppuration stopping. On the sixteenth day all the wounds had healed, and the man was so little affected by his adventure that he told me he was going out the following day to try to shoot a buck. His friend got off much lighter; he had two or three nasty gashes from the lion's claws on his ribs and stomach, but soon was well again.

Whenever lions are met accompanied by a lioness, the sportsman should make sure of the lioness first, even though this may lose him the lion which will often make off on seeing the lioness fall. If the lion is shot at first and injured, the lioness will almost invariably charge, though there are occasional exceptions to this rule as will be seen from the following story.

In September, 1908, I was shifting camp from the neighbourhood of Lake Mweru to another site further inland. I sent my men on with loads, keeping five back, two of these carrying my rifles, one a ·450 double express, the other a ·303 magazine carbine for which I had only three cartridges, having on the previous day used up my supply in shooting puku and various other buck. I took a cut across country on the chance of getting some meat for my carriers. The three cartridges for my .303 were used upon a duiker and a puku bull, leaving me with only the cartridges for the .450. Between one and two o'clock I sat down to rest and to get something to eat, being then only about five miles distant from my new camp. As I started to make for this immediately after lunch I saw a reedbuck standing some 200 yards away. A shot from the ·450 knocked it over, but evidently without doing it very much damage, for it got up and went off. The country at this place was mostly open plain, broken with [patches of thorny acacia, some of these patches being pretty thick. The blood spoor of the buck led amongst the trees and was not easy to follow owing to the quantity of brown dead leaves that had fallen. We followed it very slowly for half an hour, when suddenly one of my men called out, "There it is dead under the trees." On looking at the place, thirty yards off, I saw not one brown object

lying on the ground, but also another. I walked slowly up to within twenty yards and then found there were two lions having a siesta, their backs being towards me, one being a three-parts grown lion, the other a lioness. I took careful aim with the ·450 and fired at the centre of the spine of the lion. As soon as I had fired the lioness sprang up and faced me, and at the same time two other lions started up amongst the bushes beyond and went off without waiting to see the cause of the disturbance. The lion I had wounded was rolling over and over on the ground clawing the air, while the lioness, looking first at the wounded lion, then at me, was lashing her tail to the accompaniment of low growling. I had just one cartridge now in my left barrel, and the question flashed through my mind, should I keep it for the lioness or finish off the lion upon the ground? She, however, looked so threatening that I gave the vote in her favour and taking careful aim at her chest fired. As I fired, instead of falling as I expected she would, she stopped, turning her head from side to side in an undecided way, which shewed that the bullet must have missed her; but she was sufficiently near to have got the blast of the powder in her face. So there I was, standing with an empty gun, wondering what was going to happen next. To my surprise, my gun-bearer, a man called Kapindo, whose name I am glad to put

on record, left the safety of the trees and brought me up two spare cartridges. I remember as I was putting them in wondering which of us would be knocked over before I was able to shut the breech of my gun, as the lioness still stood threateningly. As I got the rifle to my shoulder she suddenly wheeled round, and with a final snarl dashed off behind an anthill and away amongst the trees without giving me an opportunity for another shot. The wounded lion had got on his feet in the meanwhile, and had gone off fairly rapidly after the first two amongst the thick trees. There was very little blood and I only followed the spoor for a short way, not being at all keen to come up to these four lions with only one rifle. The following day the natives came upon the lion dying in the bush some two miles away from where it had been wounded. I have always regretted not going out myself to get this lion's skin, for though I offered the natives twenty shillings to put a spear through it and bring the skin in, they never came back, so I presume either the lion had managed to crawl away into some thicker cover, or else, which is much more likely, the natives were too terrified to approach and finish it. This adventure of mine, though interesting, gives me no pleasure to relate, because instead of having a brace of lions to show I have nothing except the experience, which was some-

what thrilling at the time. The ending of the story might have been very different if I had had a spare gun, or had the first lions stayed to see the fun instead of bolting, in which case there is more than the possibility that a smile might have been on the faces of the lions.

Probably the best way to ensure at least the seeing of a lion—the shooting of it being another matter—is to lie in wait for it. This is done by killing a buck or a zebra and putting the carcase out in some part of the plain or woodland which lions are known to frequent. This knowledge can always be obtained from the natives. A good way to ensure the lion finding the carcase is to take out the entrails and divide them amongst two or three natives who will then drag them in different directions through the woodland and plain, these trails leading up to where the dead buck is lying. Should a lion cross any of the trails, he will immediately follow along the scent to where the carcase lies. The bait for the lion should be arranged in such a position that a clear view of it is obtainable by the sportsman at a distance of not more than twenty-five yards. Sometimes a high ant-hill, upon the top of which he can take up a position, will give the sportsman the vantage point which is necessary and sufficient elevation to ensure his safety should the lion, on being wounded, attempt to charge.

The more common method is to build a platform either in some high trees or else upon poles sunk sufficiently into the ground to give complete stability. This platform should never be less than fourteen feet above the ground, for a lion is able to spring and reach this height with its paw.

The following story will illustrate the reach a lion can attain when it wishes.

A party of natives were walking along a path, when they saw a lion and lioness ahead of them. These people at once turned to run away as the lions came towards them. One man was promptly pulled down and killed by the lioness; a woman of the party with a young baby on her back, who was a little distance behind, managed to climb a tree, and had got to a certain distance when the lion charged for the tree and springing in the air caught her by the foot and brought her down, killing and subsequently eating her. Two white men, who had heard of the occurrence from the other natives, went to the place where the tragedy had occurred, but by the time they reached it the lions had disappeared, having eaten what they wanted of the bodies. Out of curiosity they measured the height of the branch above the ground on which the woman had been standing, and they found that it was fourteen feet above the ground. The branch also shewed some of the claw marks where the paws

had touched it as the claws caught the woman's foot. It is highly improbable that a wounded lion or lioness would be able to jump even half this height, but it is just as well to ensure against accidents by having the platform at a sufficient height above the ground.

This platform, which is known as a "Machan" in India where it is used for tiger-shooting, is called a "Chintaba" in the central portions of North-East Rhodesia. The killing of a fresh buck or zebra is a much more certain way of attracting a lion than waiting beside an animal which has already been killed by a lion on the chance that the lion will return to the carcase. Frequently even after all these preparations have been made, and even when lions are known to be in the locality, the sportsman spending all night upon the top of this platform may come down tired, cold and sleepy at dawn having seen or heard nothing during the night. It is of no use to wait up for lions unless there is bright moonlight. Their coats lend themselves so well to the shade that they are practically invisible in the darkness, even if only a few yards away. The sportsman again, while sitting up at night, upon one of these platforms, may have his attention suddenly drawn to the presence of some animal busily engaged in tearing away at the dead buck. If he is not very careful he will find that he

has fired at a hyena, and probably spoiled any chance of seeing a lion, which would at once take alarm upon hearing the gun. When the hunter decides to shoot lions in this manner he should provide himself with a pair of night glasses. Though objects may be clearly seen on a moonlight night, it is not always easy to judge the distance accurately nor to distinguish clearly beyond a limited radius of vision with the naked eye. As the sportsman lies on the top of this platform, his rifle at the ready, his nerves keen with waiting, it becomes possible for him to distort a blurred patch of bush into the shape of a couching lion, or the rustle of some grass, produced by some small mammal, causes him to imagine the near approach of the same animal. The night may have partly gone, each hour of waiting dragging along its weary length, a length which cannot be made more bearable by smoking, when suddenly, without warning, the drowsing sportsman is roused by hearing the muffled growl, half roar, which the lions make when springing upon their prey. He must then decide what he is going to do in the way of killing the lion, for if he wounds it by a badly placed shot the lion will probably go off and he may never see it again.

The difficulty, at night, is of course to align the sights of the rifle upon the object fired at, the tendency being for the hunter to fire too low; this

can be avoided by chalking the fore sight of the rifle, or failing that a small piece of white paper, moistened, will serve the same purpose. The best part to aim at is the region of the chest and shoulder, but if the animal is a lion heavily maned, allowance must be made for the deceptiveness of this mass of hair, otherwise the bullet will pass over its back or neck without doing any harm. If the lion is facing the sportsman, there is no better shot than one fired into the chest. One such shot fired by a friend of mine from a .303 at a distance of about twenty yards was cut out from the root of the tail, having gone clean through the body. The most fatal shot, of course, is through the head, but it is not always an easy one, and at night is certainly much more difficult.

A sportsman, when he sees his first lion at close quarters, must have exceptional nerves to be able to take a cool and deliberate shot, for whether he is brave or timid, he must feel a thrill of excitement which does not lend to the holding of a steady rifle.

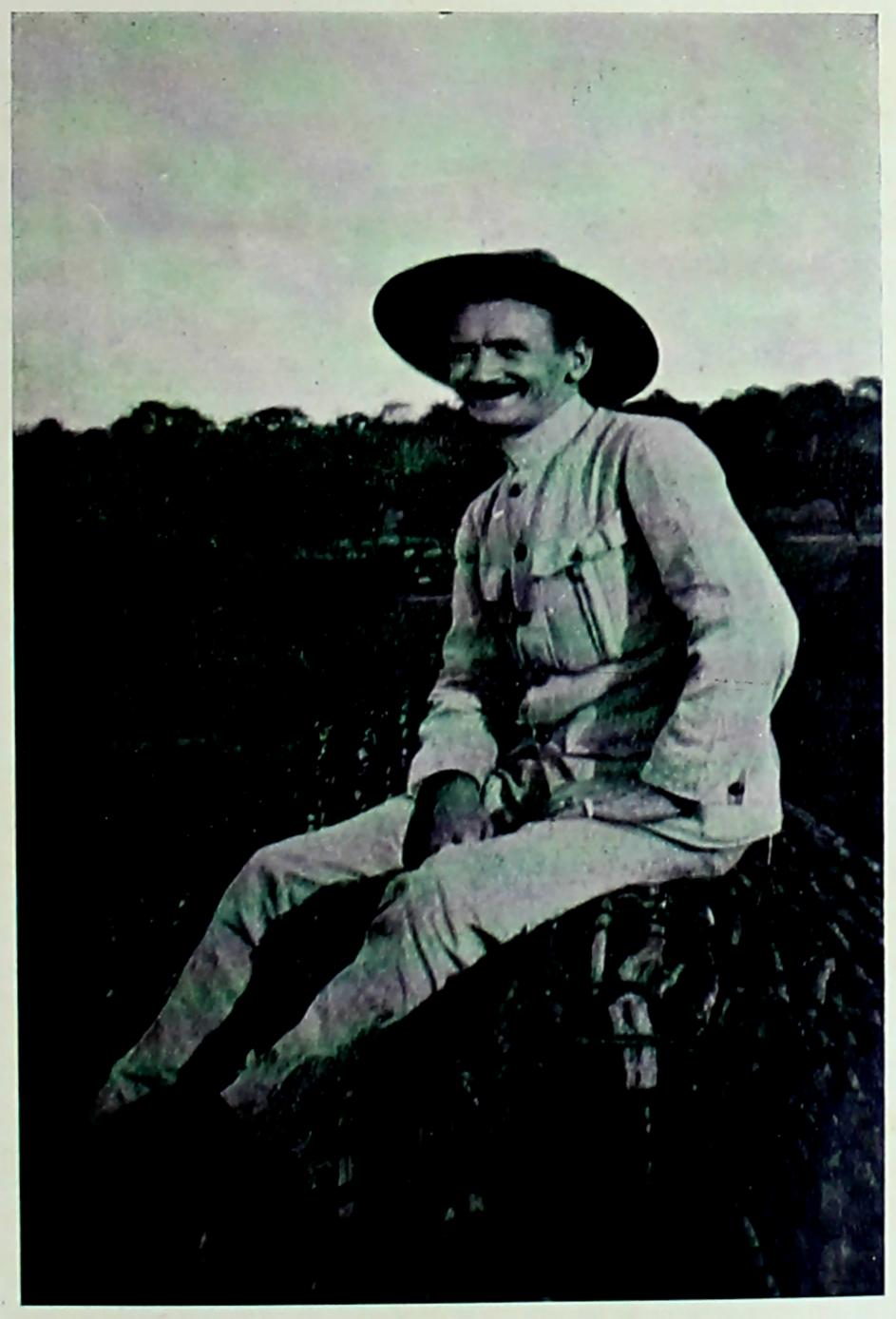
The sportsman waiting on the platform, having fired his shot, and having the satisfaction of seeing the lion rolling about on the ground, should at once give it just as many more shots as will satisfy him that it is actually dead. The want of this precaution lost a friend of mine the only chance he had of bagging a lion from one of these platforms.

He was sitting waiting over the carcase of a cow which had been killed earlier in the day by a lion, in the hope that it would return to finish its meal. While it was still daylight the lion suddenly appeared from amongst the bushes, and as my friend shoved the safety catch back from his ·450 the animal, hearing the click, looked up. My friend then fired at its chest, knocking the lion over, and it lay rolling about on the ground. By an extraordinary oversight he had only one cartridge in his rifle, the rest of the cartridges being in the possession of a native who was up a tree some distance away. He was therefore unable to fire another shot at the lion, which was rolling and groaning on the ground, and he was forced to sit and watch in the hope that it would soon die, as he could not well leave his platform, for fear of being attacked. To add to his annoyance the lion got on to its feet and went off amongst the bushes, leaving behind it a fair quantity of blood. As it was then pretty dark my friend decided that it was useless to take up the trail that night. Early next morning, accompanied by a crowd of natives, he went to the place where the lion had disappeared in the bushes, hoping to find it dead, but not a bit of it; the trail went wandering away amongst the grass, the blood lessening till finally the blood spoor stopped, and soon afterwards, the ground being hard and stony, all trace

of the lion's padmarks were lost, and nothing was ever seen or heard of that lion again. The native trackers were offered a large reward to pick up the trail, but they were all baffled.

When a sportsman wishes to get a lion by this method and has not been successful in seeing one after the first night's watching, it is not much use his spending another night on the same platform. If he is sure that lions are in that locality he would do better to put up another platform at some other part of the plain, returning to the first platform a few nights later, if still unsuccessful after the second night. By this time the scent left by the natives when putting up the platform will have disappeared from the ground, and it is this scent which may have prevented the lion from visiting the carcase of the dead animal on the first occasion, for they are wary animals and are generally shy of anything they do not understand.

It is this shyness which will often frustrate the shooting of man-eaters, for though these maneaters may be frequently around a village, yet when they see the tent of a European pitched in or near the village, they will not attempt to enter it. Many of my friends who have waited up, not one night but several, to try to shoot man-eaters have been disappointed in seeing them, and have had the additional mortification of hearing in the morning



Mr. Robert Young, an intrepid Pioneer and Official.

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that these lions have taken people during the night from another village close by. When it is desired to make sure of seeing these man-eaters the sportsman's tent should be pitched a considerable distance away and he should take up his position before sundown upon some platform built in one of the high trees which are generally left in these villages to give shade to the inhabitants, taking every precaution that the lions which are accustomed to enter the village on their search for human victims should not have their suspicions roused by anything unusual in its appearance. Even although all these precautions are taken, the lions may enter at some other point and take an incautious inhabitant without giving the sportsman any opportunity of a shot. Of course, in a case of this kind, all that can be done is to leave the platform and follow the trail. If this is done during the night by the aid of a lamp or torches there is but little chance of ever coming up to the lion, which will continue to move off in front of the advancing lights. As the lion will have finished its meal during the night and have gone to some lair far away, it is equally hopeless to follow this trail in the early morning.

Generally speaking, the destruction of maneaters by officials, even when they devote much time to the express purpose, is a long and often unsuccessful enterprise. One reason for this is that

man-eating lions will travel over large districts, taking a victim from one village one night, another from a village some ten miles off the following night, so that it is extremely difficult to locate them, and it must be quite a matter of chance for the visits of the official and the lion to coincide in any one place. These man-eaters cause the greatest terror in the districts which they haunt. When they take up man-eating nothing will turn them from it. A lion may not necessarily be an old one when he starts man-eating, and it may be that his first victim has been killed by mistake; for example, a lion visiting native gardens for bush-pig or even native dogs, may come upon a native man or woman clothed in the skin of some buck, and he springs upon the stooping figure, possibly imagining that it is a buck. Once, then, having killed and eaten a native his usual subsequent procedure is to sneak into a village at sunset, when the natives, according to African custom, are sitting round little fires gossiping previous to retiring, for with the natives it is "Early to bed and early to rise." He then approaches a group and makes a sudden spring from behind a hut on to the back of a selected victim. At once there is a frenzied outcry from the others, who bolt in all directions, shouting out, "Lion, lion," the whole village joining in the yelling. The lion bounds off with his capture like a cat with

a mouse. The next day the villagers turn out, each man with his spear or bow and arrow, all shaking with fear, to follow the lion's trail, not with the hope of killing it, or seeing it even—far from it but of bringing in what may be left of the body for burial. For several nights the same lion may visit the village, but he will find no more gossiping natives to spring upon. All the huts are shut and barred long before sundown. If the lion is in luck's way he may pick up an incautious reveller going home after a beer drink at some friend's hut. As a rule, though, after a few nights' fruitless waiting for another victim, he goes off to a different village and repeats the performance, shifting his locale rapidly from one village to another. This he does so that no one may know where he is or where he will attack, for these man-eaters develop a tremendous cunning. Sometimes several lions will combine, and then the huts are broken into and natives taken wholesale. I once passed the remains of a deserted village which four lions had attacked nightly, some few years previously, breaking into the huts and killing and maining twenty-four people in a few days, the survivors then deserting the village in terror.

There is one strip of the territory in North-East Rhodesia which lies north of the Kalangwesi River, some fifty miles in length, bordering Lake Mweru,

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which has been from all time a favourite haunt of lions, and of man-eaters as well. This strip is narrow, having a high range of continuous mountains on the one side, while on the other is the water of the lake. This range of hills is the commencement of the large game reserve, and there is no doubt that while all game is increasing rapidly, the lions also are increasing and wander into the country around. In the old days this strip of land was densely populated, but now the villages are few and the population very small. Possibly, with the lessening of the population, the lions have increased in boldness, for they are found everywhere in the neighbourhood of these villages. There are none to slay them, for shooting in this part of the country is forbidden to hunters, not only because of the big game reserve, but because, owing to the presence of sleeping sickness, the district is closed to all but the officials who are concerned with its suppression, and these officials have but little time to spend in lion-shooting. The hills which rise behind are full of ravines which contain bushes and tangled grass, giving excellent shelter for lions, leopards and hyenas.

The following is an account of the depredations of a man-eating lion in this district. It was in January, 1909, that the first of what was to prove a long series of deaths caused by a lion, was reported

by the natives to us at Chiengi station. A lion described by the natives as a large male, very light in colour, had taken a woman from a village called Msika, not far from Lake Mweru. A few days afterwards another woman was taken from the same village; both of these were killed at sundown. A week later a man and his wife had just left Msika, to visit friends at a neighbouring village, when they met the lion in the road at eight o'clock in the morning close to a small stream which crosses the road. The lion sprang at the man, who feebly tried to defend himself, while his wife climbed a tree and screamed for help, the village being about a quarter of a mile away, its gardens extending to the stream. None of the villagers ventured to approach, and the man was killed and devoured almost before his wife's eyes. A few days later, about 5.30 p.m., a woman was grinding corn at the next village, called Chisunga, working under the eaves of her hut with another woman beside her. The "white" lion, as it was called by the natives, sneaked round the hut and killed both the women, carrying off one of them. At the same village a man who had been recently in my employ was working in his garden in the afternoon when the same lion was seen to spring upon him and kill him, carrying away his body. The lion then left the shores of Lake Mweru and made for the hills, for his

next appearance was at a small isolated village high up on these hills, called Chilindi. There had been a shower of rain, which had passed off, and the natives had built numerous little fires throughout the village, at which they were sitting warming themselves. The lion came into the village, and before all the natives could seek safety in their huts, he sprang upon one of the women and carried her off. The next village to this is a small one some four miles away, called Sangi, the headman being a brother of the chief of Chilindi. Sangi has about fourteen huts and is exceedingly untidy, with anthills amongst the huts, and rough high grass growing right up to the edge of the village. Here the lion took a woman from her door.

On February 17 in the same year I pitched my tent in this village to stay the night. At six o'clock it started to thunder and rain, and became rapidly dark. My native assistant, a very clever, mission-educated man, both talking and writing English well, and for whom I had a great regard, had just left me after receiving his orders, and seated himself beside the camp fire where he started talking to my gun-bearers and some of the carriers. About fifteen minutes later I got into my hot bath, which was placed as usual in a glass shelter at the rear of my tent. I was just drying myself when I heard a lion's roar within a few feet of me.

This was at once followed by a wild outcry from my men at the camp fire, with shouts of "A lion! A lion!" My tent was rushed and filled in a minute with terror-stricken men. I scrambled into pyjamas and slippers, shouting for silence and calling for all the candles and my gun. Unfortunately I had no lantern. We also lighted torches of dried grass torn from the inside of the hut roofs. On arriving at the place whence we had heard the roar of the lion, on the other side of the fire from the tent, and only thirteen yards away from the tent door, we saw that a man had been taken, for in the wet ground was the imprint of a man's body, in addition to the marks of the lion's paws. The lion had been standing on a tobacco bed and had sprung upon the man as he left the fire and passed between the bed and the hut. Close by I picked up a piece of blue calico which was at once recognized as belonging to my native assistant. Some of my men shouted his name loudly in the darkness, hoping against hope that he might answer, but of course no reply came. I had just started to follow the track of the lion through some long wet grass when the rain again came down and extinguished candles and torches, leaving us in darkness. I fired two shots along the track taken by the lion, as I left. There was no sleep that night for either myself or the men; the latter were terror-stricken, and I myself,

besides being horror-stricken at the loss of my assistant, was, in addition, kept awake by the talking of the men, who were sitting huddled together under the protection of my tent, firmly convinced that the lion would come back some time during the night for another victim, and could not be assured otherwise.

At daybreak I started out with my .450 to kill the lion if I could. I was following the track through the wet grass when unfortunately one of the natives shouted out and startled the lion, which had evidently been lying eating the body quite close to the village. The place it had vacated was quite warm, showing that it had but just recently left it; the grass was smeared with blood with a few broken bones strewn about. On hearing the man shout it had evidently picked up the body and was carrying it off in front of us, but I could not get a sight of the brute owing to the long grass. At a slight rise in the ground we found it had put the body down, and walked round behind a tree to get a sight of its It had then picked up the body and gone off, mounting a hill consisting of very rocky ground. As I got to the top of this hill I saw something brown quite close to me, lying amongst some bushes and weeds, and was just on the point of firing, thinking that it was the coat of the lion, when one of my gun-bearers took me by the arm

and said, "Don't fire; it is the man." On getting a better view I saw that the brown was the khakicoloured uniform tunic of my native assistant.

The poor fellow was lying peacefully on his back, the right arm crossing his chest, the left extended as though he were asleep. He was in no way disfigured, having been killed by a bite on the neck.

His right leg was entirely eaten off by the hip, and the back of his left knee was also eaten. The lion had gone off, finding the chase too hot, and so had left the body, as it thought, hidden, no doubt with the intention of returning later to complete its meal.

I left the body where it was and took up the trail again. This was now most difficult to follow, as the ground was exceedingly rocky, and it was only occasionally that I could pick up a footmark here and there. I followed these footmarks as best I could for half a mile, till they led into a ravine filled with huge boulders and grass some ten feet high, and numerous thorn bushes. I waded into this and climbed a boulder which gave me some command of the sides of the ravine, this being of no great extent and sloping upwards towards the hills. I then told the natives, of whom there were about four-teen, including my two gun-bearers, who were carrying a loaded rifle and shotgun, to beat the grass for me. This the cowards refused to do, in spite of

threats and offers of reward, and not even the explanation that the lion wanted to escape would encourage them. The most they would do for me was to throw stones into the grass. These people belonged to an old slave tribe called Watabwa, who are not only deficient in physical courage, but are strongly possessed of the belief that a maneating lion contains the spirit of a dead chief, and that if this one lion is slain the spirit will divide itself among other lions, which will become maneaters also; thus they were really against my finding and shooting this lion. This I found out later. The native who shouted in the first instance had been instructed by his companions to do so, in order to warn the lion and thus prevent my killing it.

It may be interesting to relate a curious prophecy which had been made by their paramount chief, who had died a few days before the first victim was taken by this man-eater. The chief, who was an old man, had expressed himself aggrieved by being reproved by the Administration for his treatment of some of his people. On his deathbed, a few days afterwards, he told several of his headmen that he was dying, but that he would come back as a lion and revenge himself upon the people who had worried him, killing and eating them. This prophecy of the dead chief was well known through-

out the country, and was no doubt an integral factor in deterring the natives who had accompanied me from rendering me any assistance to shoot this lion.

Very reluctantly I left the brute in possession of the ravine, for I knew that the result of my having failed to kill it would be yet other tragedies. We then returned and picked up the body of my assistant, which we buried close to the village. I heard afterwards a lion had tried to dig it up. I have regretted ever since that I did not leave the body where I first found it amongst the rocks. If instead of trying to follow the lion I had waited until it returned, I should have had an excellent opportunity of shooting it.

For two nights the lion wandered about this village, and then followed the line of hills to another village called Lambwe, where it took a boy right from the middle of the village in the afternoon, though many people were standing close by. After this it took two men in quick succession from a miserable little village called Kabemwe, close to Lambwe. The lion was next seen close to Lake Mweru again, upon the banks of the Luawo River which runs into the Lake. Here there are several villages close together. From one of these it took a man, following this act up promptly by taking two women and then another man from two other

villages. By this time it had discovered that it was quite an easy matter to kill people whenever it wanted food, and it used to make one meal only, never returning twice to the same body. The trap-guns and poisoned meat put out for it in the various villages only succeeded in destroying leopards and hyenas. Finding no more victims here for four days, as the natives shut themselves up in their huts early in the afternoon and did not venture out till well after sunrise the next morning, it trekked for ten miles along the road to a village called Sheriweri, five miles from Chiengi Government House. Here it took a sick woman who was living in an isolated hut just outside the village. She had been sitting at her hut door. It then went up the hills, returning to Sengi, where it had killed my native assistant. Finding the natives still wary, for they had seen its pad-marks one morning amongst the huts and had kept themselves well shut up, it came down again and killed a man at sunrise in the centre of the village one mile behind Chiengi Station. The natives, who were all about at the time, shouted and drove it off from the body of the man, who was however quite dead, his neck having been broken by a blow from the lion's paw. The brute then travelled down the main mail road along the Lake side to the Kalangwesi River, where it inaugurated a panic by taking people from village

after village and even when walking along the main road, so that it became unsafe for any native to walk about towards sunset. Trap-guns put down were useless. At this time I was transferred to a new district 100 miles away. The next thing I heard of it was that it had been seen one evening just outside the Government House at Chiengi. Luckily that night the servants, returning after their work to their native quarters, saw it and ran back to safety into the house. The lion, baulked of its prey, went off, in its rage pulling up some sticks which had been put in to mark the lines of a new path leading from the house to the office on the hill. The next night it returned, and as three boys left the house it sprang from behind some grass which had been piled for thatching purposes, and took the kitchen boy who was in the middle. It swung this boy over its shoulder by his left arm, going off towards the hills with him. One of these boys had been armed by Mr. Sealy, the Native Commissioner at Chiengi, with a gun, but he was so frightened at the sight of the lion that although he fired, and was only two yards away, he missed; this boy was an Awemba, a much braver race than the Watabwa. The next morning the track of the lion was followed by a crowd of natives, one of whom was armed with a rifle. They found the leg of the poor boy, which had been bitten off

below the knee, a few hundred yards from the place from where he had been taken. Presumably the boy had been hitting the lion over the eyes with his other hand, when the animal threw him down and bit off his leg, possibly killing him at the same time. The track led for another three miles up the hills. As the natives mounted the hill, the man with the rifle leading the way, they suddenly came upon the lion, twenty yards away, standing over the body of its victim. The native immediately fired his rifle, and of course missed the lion, which then stole contemptuously away. It was unfortunate that these natives had started to follow the lion, for had they waited for Mr. Sealy, it would have been shot and in consequence several lives would have been saved.

When Mr. Sealy, accompanied by Mr. Scott of the Mbereshi Mission, who were on the trail of the lion, arrived at the place where the body of the boy lay they found an excited crowd of natives, but the lion, as I have said, had made off.

The brute haunted Chiengi for some time after this, and then returned towards the Kalangwesi River. About a week after the above occurrence I had occasion to travel to Chiengi from my new station, in connection with the sleeping sickness work. Some twenty miles from Chiengi I stopped for lunch at a village called Tawache. While I was

eating under the shade of a tree, the Chief of the village came up to me saying that he had had a terrible time of it during the night with a lion, and asked me to go and see his hut. When I got there I found a large part of the wall broken down on each side of the door-posts, the door being loosened on its fastenings. He told me that the lion had attacked his hut in the early hours of the evening and that he and a young wife with a baby had to sit and watch the work of destruction going on, having no spear or knife with which to defend themselves. Every now and again the paws of the lion would come breaking into the holes which were gradually growing larger as it was endeavouring to claw its way in through the dried mud and sticks which formed the walls of the hut. At last it got its head and one forepaw in, the hole not being sufficiently large to enable the whole of its body to pass through. The young wife then, with great presence of mind, pulled the burning wood from the fire with which she belaboured the head of the beast, finally forcing it to retire. They spent the rest of the night in fear and trembling, unable to sleep, expecting the return of the lion at any moment. However, they were left in peace.

I advised the Chief to go to a large town some miles away and borrow spears for his and his people's

protection, and this advice certainly saved the lives of two other men in this village.

The following night the lion took a man from the next village a mile away. Two nights afterwards it again returned to Tawache where it had tried to break into the hut of the Chief. It again tried this new game of hut-breaking to get at the people inside, but by this time the people had taken my advice and got spears. Luckily two young men were inside the hut it had attacked, both armed with spears, and as the lion pushed its head through a hole it had torn in the wall they jabbed at it with their spears until it retired, growling with rage, carrying off one spear stuck in its neck. This spear it pulled out with its teeth as it was found a hundred yards away the next morning much damaged. The blade was of soft iron of native manufacture and had probably only penetrated the skin. For two days after this it was neither seen nor heard of. By this time Mr. Lyons of Kawamba had sent out a trusted hunter armed with a service rifle. This man also put down numerous trapguns round these villages, and poisoned meat. On the third day after the lion had been jabbed with the spear I was travelling back from Chiengi, and on arriving close to the village of Tawache, I came upon a large pool of fresh blood in the middle of the road, close to where a trap-gun had been

Propped up for Photo.



Man-eating Lion, shot while eating his victim.



Photo]

Lioness.

[R. A. Osborne.

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THE LION

placed. On arriving at the village I heard that this native hunter had put down the part of a dead sheep beside the trap-gun, and that the lion coming along the road had pulled at the meat with its paw and had fired the trap-gun, wounding itself badly.

The gun was an old-fashioned Snider loaded with heavy ball. The natives on hearing the gun ran out, hoping to find the brute dead, but though they saw it staggering away badly wounded none of them had enough courage to finish it off with spears. One of them went off to the next village to call for the native hunter, who followed the trail of the lion for five miles to some thick bush where he was afraid to follow further. As this lion was no more seen for six weeks we all hoped that it had died from its wound. However, we were doomed to disappointment, for three people were promptly killed in quick succession from a village called Kalembwe nine miles south from Chiengi on the same road as the other villages, and the people were again in despair. That it was the same lion was confirmed by several of the villagers who had seen it, owing to its very light colour being unmistakable. From this time onward its boldness and ferocity seemed to increase. One afternoon it came into Chiengi Station in the broad daylight, but every one being able to see it took refuge. At this time there were no white officials on the Station.

The lion lay outside the carpenter's house for sometime, growling, but did not try to break in. Another day it came into the Station about five o'clock in the afternoon and was seen by some natives lying on the veranda of the office, evidently waiting for the native clerk, who was working inside, to come out. It was fired at and wounded by a native armed with an old gun, and also fired at by the Native Commissioner, but again managed to get away.

It then left Chiengi, taking natives from time to time from other villages. A couple of weeks later it entered a village close to Chiengi in the afternoon and killed the Chief and his brother, who were sitting beside a small fire on the edge of the road. Within a week after this, this lion with two others raged through the administrative town of Chiengi for several nights, trying to break into several of the houses, and finally jumping over the wall which surrounded the Commissioner's house, round which they tramped, roaring and growling for several hours during the night. Luckily they were unsuccessful in getting any victim. Shortly after this Mr. Lyons, the Magistrate of Kawamba, paid a visit to Chiengi. He spent several nights waiting up for these lions, but did not succeed in getting a sight of them. One night while he was waiting upon his platform, a man was taken and carried away

THE LION

within a hundred yards of where Mr. Lyons was waiting. After this, trap-guns were put down upon every path with the strings attached to the triggers stretched across the path on the chance that the lion, on entering the village by one of these paths, might touch the string and discharge the gun, which would possibly kill or wound it seriously. This plan proved to be immediately successful, for the following night two of these guns went off, one destroying the man-eater with a shot through the ear, another wounding a lion on another path which, however, managed to escape into the bush, leaving a blood trail behind it.

Naturally there was great rejoicing on the part of all the natives at the destruction of their enemy who had terrorized them for so long and had taken so many victims. It was an old lion, evidently unfitted for the active pursuit of game, but it certainly showed great intelligence and great vitality in the way it recovered from its previous wounds. In its stomach, when it was cut open, were numerous toe and finger nails of its last victim. It is curious that it should have escaped destruction so long, for besides the history I have already given of the times it was fired at, it was once missed by an ex-Sergeant of Police who saw it, in broad daylight, a short distance away from a stockaded camp. This man was armed with a ·303

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rifle and, had he had the sense to refrain from firing, and to call to Mr. Sealy, the Native Commissioner, who was actually sitting in his tent at the time, many subsequent victims might have been saved, for, needless to say, as soon as the shot was fired the lion made off into the bush uninjured.

One morning, when out camping in the bush, twelve miles south of Kawamba, I left camp in the early morning to try to get some meat for my men. I followed up the side of a wood and on the paths I noticed several recent pad-marks of lions in the sandy soil. I noticed also, that there had been buck, but that these, for some reason or other, had rushed back into the wood, their hoof-marks all showing rapid flight. I therefore came to the conclusion that the lions had spoilt my morning chance of getting a buck. I followed up the path for a mile and a half, to where there was a large outcrop of rocky ground, beyond which the plain swept away. A considerable distance away on the plain were some roan and zebra, and I was going to manœuvre for a shot when amongst some rocks I saw a couple of half-grown lion cubs walking about. I at once fired at one of these some sixty yards away and it rolled over. I then fired at the second one but missed it, and before I had time to fire again, a lioness, evidently their mother, sprang up from some rocks not more than eighty yards away, between

THE LION

me and the cubs. She looked at me and then turned round and looked at her wounded cub and seemed to be on the point of charging, so I gave her a shot from the mauser. This hit a rock close to her, a bad miss on my part, but I was somewhat flurried. I had only the three cartridges in the mauser, so I at once gripped my .303 carbine from the gunbearer close to me, and as she was on the point of charging got a shot into her shoulder, upon which she wheeled round and dropped dead. I found out afterwards that this shot had gone through her spine. The wounded cub was then joined by two others and I got a shot at one of them before they disappeared amongst the rocks, hitting it through the hip, while I missed the third clean. The skin of the lioness, when dried, measured 8 ft. 6 in. This skin now adorns one of the rooms in the Authors' Club.

Chapter XXIV

LEOPARD, CHEETAH AND OTHER CATS

THE LEOPARD

THE leopard is common enough everywhere, but as it lies up during the day in thick bush, or extended upon the branch of a tree high above the ground, it is very rarely met with by the sports-A favourite home of the leopard is a dense Msito wood, so shady that even in the height of the noonday sun but little light filters through the leaves. In the late afternoon it goes wandering through the grass on the search for pig, duiker, a flock of guineafowl or a partridge. In common with leopards in other parts of the world, the African leopard looks upon dog flesh as the greatest of delicacies, and it will prowl about night after night in the vicinity of native villages, on the chance of getting a dog. I do not know whether a leopard that is looking for a dog possesses more courage or more cheek, for on numerous occasions they have not only followed dogs into European houses but have actually entered the houses through the open windows to look for them. I heard of a Missionary

who was sleeping by his wife and was awakened in the night by a noise in his room. It was bright moonlight, and standing at the window with its paws resting on the toilet table was a large leopard. The Missionary had neither gun nor revolver and was wondering what was going to happen next. As the leopard rested the whole of its weight on its forepaws preparatory to jumping in, the leg of the table luckily gave way, and the animal retired. The Missionary immediately jumped out and shut the windows. Probably this leopard was attracted by the smell of a dog which slept in the house.

From one Station in the centre of the territory most of the dogs were taken, many of these having European masters, and though trap-guns were put down no leopard was ever seen or shot. Some of these dogs disappeared in the middle of the day. Owing to there being plenty of cover of rough grass and bush close up to the houses the leopard had excellent opportunities of taking the dogs almost from under their owners' noses.

Leopards, unless wounded, seldom attack human beings, but when wounded they become exceedingly ferocious and will invariably charge. They are extraordinarily quick in their movements and make for the face and head with their claws, while they endeavour to bite the throat of the person they

have attacked. In a few moments they can do terrible injury with their claws. On one occasion a native rashly ventured towards a leopard that had been shot and seemed to be beyond the power of movement, but it had sufficient life left suddenly to spring up on the approach of the native and claw him, and succeeded in pulling his scalp right off. Four years ago at Broken Hill one of the white residents was brought in frightfully mauled by a leopard, the leopard being found dead beside him. He had been out alone shooting, and wounded this leopard which had charged him, and, according to the account he gave before he died, they had a prolonged fight. Previous to this encounter he had shot fourteen without accident.

Leopards will not take to man-eating unless driven by extreme hunger, and instances of this kind are very rare, as are unprovoked attacks upon human beings. One such attack happened a year or two back close to the Congo border, in the district through which I was travelling at the time. A villager had been going along a path carrying his child of two years old astride upon his shoulder. As he passed under a tree a leopard, which was lying extended upon a branch above, and which the man probably had not noticed, reached down and clawed at the baby. The man struck at the leopard with a stick he had in his hand, upon which the



Photo]

Lake Young.

[F. H. Melland.



Photo]

Crossing the Chambezi River.

[R. E. Young.

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leopard sprang upon him, bringing him and his child to the ground. Some other natives hearing the noise rushed up and frightened the leopard away, but both father and child were dead. According to the report brought to me by the natives the man had been killed in rather a curious way, one of the claws of the leopard having reached his heart as he clawed him on the ground. As I did not myself see the body I cannot vouch that this was the actual cause of death.

Leopards also will not hesitate to attack if disturbed and their cubs are near; in fact any interference with their cubs will rouse them into a ferocity which can only be sated by the death of a victim. Two Angoni villagers, as they were going through the woodland, came upon three little leopard cubs of a few weeks old playing amongst some rocks. They watched them for some time, and seeing no sign of the parent leopards decided to pick them up and take them on with them to the village. They had only gone a mile or two when they were attacked by the female leopard which had followed their track. She killed them both and took her cubs away.

Even when the man is unarmed the leopard does not always get the best of an unprovoked attack. Some little time ago a European resident was walking in his compound late in the evening

when a leopard, possibly after a chicken, of which they are great thieves, sprang upon his back. Reaching up with his hands, he got the leopard by the loose skin round its throat and tugged at it in an effort to save himself, having no weapon of any kind. As he did this they both fell, and in falling the leopard detached itself, the man falling on top of it. With great presence of mind he at once gripped it by the neck and succeeded in strangling it, and curious to say, except for the original bite and scratches when the animal first sprang on him, he escaped all injury. This was explained by the fact that as he strangled it the leopard was lying on its back and he was well inside the four legs upon its chest and stomach, so that the animal was unable to use its claws. On another occasion an Angoni native, going from one village to another, was attacked in a similar manner during the daytime by a leopard. He pursued the tactics just described, pulling the leopard down from off his back, but he was more fortunate than the European mentioned, as he had a short stabbing spear, which natives generally carry, and with this he soon put an end to the animal.

When I was at Fort Jameson in April, 1908, two natives were killed close to the Government farm, which is about four miles from the township. The first was a small boy who used to carry a

can of milk from the farm in the morning. He did not turn up one morning, and if I remember rightly, only one of his feet was found. Close to the place where he was killed on the road an old man, who was working in his garden about 7 a.m. two days later, was also killed. The expert hunters who examined the tracks and pad-marks thought the attacking animal was a male leopard. A platform was built upon poles close to where these natives had been killed, but although careful watch was kept for several nights nothing further was seen of the animal, which might possibly have been a hungry lioness, as lions are often in the vicinity of this farm, attracted by the numerous heads of cattle kept there.

Leopards usually move about in pairs, the male and the female, the cubs being two or three in number. As soon as they are old enough to hunt for themselves, the cubs generally leave their parents, but occasionally remain with them until nearly full-grown. I think this is especially the case in districts where there are large plains on which numbers of the smaller buck feed, such as reedbuck and oribi. They combine together to hunt these small buck as it is frequently very difficult for a single leopard to get within striking distance of them since they invariably keep a keen look-out, with eye and nose, for danger. One man told me

he had watched a single leopard trying to get within springing distance of a small herd of puku which were feeding in the early morning. The plain was open with but little cover, and he was able to watch its method. The puku were quite aware of the presence of the leopard and what it was after, and would stand watching it as it crawled from tuft to tuft to try to get within springing distance. When the buck thought it had got near enough they would go off for a short distance, and then stop and face it again. Every now and again the leopard would abandon its creeping tactics and make quick rushes at the buck for fifty or sixty yards when it would stop and watch them as they galloped away. The observer finally ended the leopard's hunting by putting a bullet into it. In this case the leopard was probably engaged in driving the puku to some part of the plain where either its mate or its family were waiting to spring upon them when they got near enough. It is obviously impossible for the leopard to catch one of these buck itself when they are watching its every movement; these movements are most likely intended to keep the attention of the herd upon itself and enable the other leopard, or leopards, that are probably waiting to attack unobserved.

One morning, as I was going along the edge of an

open space which led down to a thick Msito wood, through which a stream flowed, I saw a male bushbuck standing close to the wood; its head was turned away from me and it was indulging in the loud barking calls which they give when alarmed, and flicking its tail up and down at the same time. I thought at first it had seen me, but it still kept watching something which it had seen in the other direction. There was a fair amount of dry grass some three feet high, and here and there amongst the grass some ant-hills covered with thorn-bushes. The buck was partially hidden by this grass and about eighty yards from me, so I moved off some distance to the left to try to get closer to it in order to make sure of my shot. Just as I had got the sight of my rifle upon the buck, it suddenly disappeared into some thicker grass behind an ant-hill, and immediately afterwards a large male leopard dashed out of the grass and bounded after it. The buck had been quite aware of the presence of the leopard, having probably seen it as it crawled up the side of one of the ant-hills. Most likely the leopard had been induced to charge too soon by the sight of several of my men who were following behind me, and had passed close to the ant-hill on which it had been lying. I walked up to the place in the wood where they had both disappeared, but the tracks separated; the leopard had given up the

chase, as they generally do when they miss catching the buck on their first rush, knowing the futility of trying to catch a buck which has been alarmed and is in full retreat.

Some little time ago, one of the Missionaries belonging to the Order of the White Fathers, who have Settlements throughout the territory, and who are doing such excellent work amongst the natives in teaching them agriculture, and helping them by their example and methods to a better way of living, had a very unpleasant experience with a leopard. He heard from one of the herd boys that the pen of pigs had been broken into during the night and several of the pigs had been killed, and the herd boy said that the leopard was still there eating one of the pigs. The Missionary took a rifle and walked down to the pen, which was a short distance from the Monastery. When he reached the pen he was unable to see the leopard from the outside, and he opened the door and walked in, thinking the leopard had made its escape. As soon as he entered, the leopard, which had been concealed in an angle of the pen, sprang at him and threw him down, giving him no time to fire. It then proceeded to attack him savagely while he did his best to keep it off with his hands. The herd boy seeing the struggle called for one of the other White Fathers, who arrived rapidly, and taking

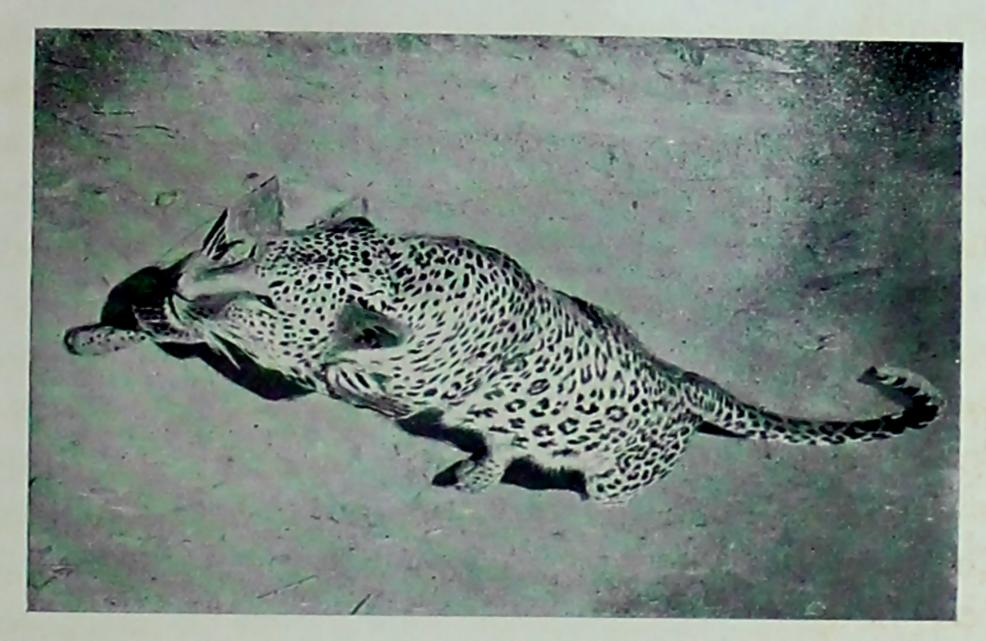
his opportunity, put a shot through the leopard's head. Though much mauled, the victim of the attack recovered, and the Father said when relating this occurrence to me, that had it not been for the thickness of the cloth of the long white garment they wear he would have probably lost his life. Such stories about leopards can be related by the score, and I might conclude with the following account of the shooting of a leopard by my friend, Mr. William Stuart, when he was in Nyassaland.

He was following the edge of a plain one afternoon on the chance of shooting a buck, being followed by ten natives ready to act as meat-carriers. As he skirted this plain close to the wood, he arrived close to a patch of high grass in the middle of which was a large tree, and upon one of the branches, some twelve feet above the ground, was extended a large leopard gazing out upon the plain, possibly trying to locate some buck to make for. My friend took careful aim for its shoulder and fired; except for a quiver of its tail the leopard did not stir, and he fired again with the same result. On the third shot the leopard came tumbling to the ground. As it fell, the grass became alive with other leopards tearing about, grunting and growling. The natives at once fled in terror, and my friend climbed an ant-hill from the top of which he could see the heads and ears of numerous leopards rushing

about amongst the grass. They finally made off, and when their noise had ceased the gun-bearer came up to him and tried to persuade him not to go up to where the fallen leopard lay as some of the others might still be there. As the grass was very long my friend allowed himself to be persuaded and went back to his camp. Towards the evening, the camp not being far away from where he had encountered the leopards, he returned with his men and carefully entered the grass-patch under the big tree. There were no leopards to be seen, but only the dead body of the very large male which he had fired at as it lay upon the branch of the tree. He found that all three bullets had hit it, one going through the heart; probably the heart shot had been the first and had paralyzed it so that it took so little notice of the other shots, falling when the tense grip of its claws upon the branch had relaxed.

THE CHEETAH

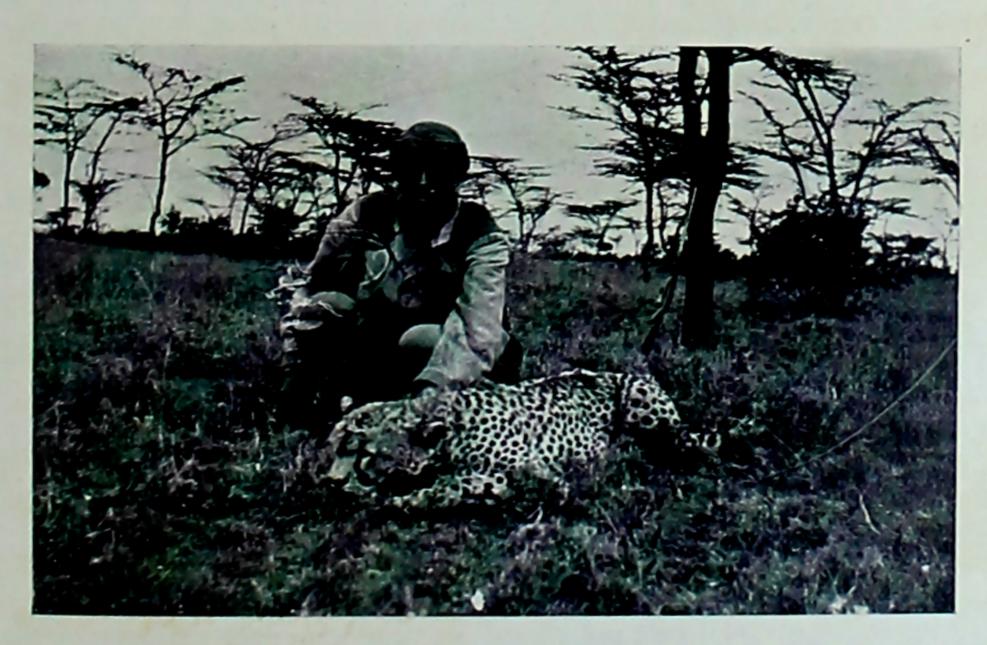
The cheetah, often called the hunting leopard, is not a leopard at all, though in appearance, with its yellow skin covered with black spots, and the shape of its head and face it resembles the true leopard. An essential point in the difference is that the claws of this animal resemble those of a dog or hyena and are non-retractile. The spots



Photo]

Male Leopard.

[F. H. Melland.



Photo]

[Hon. Susan Hicks Beach. Cheetah or Hunting-Leopard.

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are of course different as well, for instead of being in rosettes, which is typical of the black spots of the leopard skin, the spots are single. Its method of hunting is well known to every reader of books upon India, this animal being employed by the Rajahs to chase and capture the deer upon the plains. Cheetah differ in their habits also from the leopards in the localities in which they live, preferring large plains, or in some cases marsh lands. A very large variety of this animal is found in the Bangweolo marshes, and is greatly feared by the natives. It has only occasionally been seen by white men, and, as far as I know, only shot by two sportsmen, these being Mr. Joseph Edward Hughes, a resident in the territory, and his brother, who on one morning shot one each. This marsh variety is larger than its cousin of the plain, having a darker skin and a somewhat heavy mane behind its ears and round its neck. The tuft of this mane stands out prominently between its ears, and the native name for this animal is Chisumpa, meaning in the Chibemba language a person who wears a top-knot. The natives say that when the marsh dwellers are propelling themselves along the waterways of the marsh, standing in their small dug-out canoes made from a single tree, these animals, if met with, will invariably spring upon the native and kill and eat him. Frequently an overturned

canoe, and some trampled grass, blood-stained, will be the evidence to show other natives where such a tragedy has taken place, the cheetah dragging its victim to some patch of dense grass or bush in the marsh. Needless to say the natives will not venture to follow such a track, fearing that the Chisumpa may be at home and may make other victims.

Some years ago Mr. George Lyons, the Magistrate of Kawamba had word brought to him by some villagers that a cheetah had taken up its home in some thick bush close to a village which was situated upon the edge of the marsh. Mr. Lyons told me that he and a friend spent the morning trying to beat out this animal from the woodland, driving it by natives, so that they could shoot it. It broke out five times, each time seriously injuring one of the beaters, three of whom died from their wounds. Finally it escaped, swimming across the upper waters of the Kalangwesi River. These animals normally live upon the lechwe and sitatunga buck, which are found in the marshes.

The variety which lives upon the plain is lighter in colour, smaller and more agile, chasing down the buck which it has located. This hunting is invariably done by a pair of cheetahs, usually the male and female. Being exceedingly speedy they are easily able to get up to the ordinary smaller

buck, such as puku and reedbuck, and will tire it out, not so much by chasing it in a straight line, as by making it twist and turn till one or other of the animals get an opportunity of leaping at its throat. As soon as a buck is killed, they wil suck the blood from the throat, much as the weasel does, before they tear it up to eat it.

A friend of mine saw two cheetahs pull down and kill a reedbuck upon a plain. He was some distance away and unobserved by the cheetahs. As soon as they had sucked the blood from the throat, before proceeding to eat any of the flesh, they started up, playing with one another and jumping backwards and forwards over the dead buck, gambolling like kittens. When tired of this they began the furious business of satisfying their appetites. Not many of this variety have been shot, owing to their extraordinarily keen sight and quickness to be off on the slightest alarm; even when asleep, the smallest vibration of the ground made by an approaching footstep will scare them into instant activity, and a flash of disappearing yellow will be all the hunter sees. The skins that I have examined of the plain cheetah have very little of the mane and top-knot which is characteristic of the marsh variety. I have never heard of any of the plain cheetah attacking human beings, their disposition being much milder.

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THE SERVAL CAT

The Serval cat is very common, but being a nocturnal feeder, is only occasionally seen by sportsmen in the daytime. I have only seen two during the course of many thousand miles' travel through the territory, and both of these I saw in the late afternoon. On each occasion I met with them when out after other game, and they both met their death from the same rifle, namely my .500 Winchester, the bullet from which unfortunately destroyed their skins to a considerable degree, but I had no time to exchange the rifle I was carrying for a lighter one.

The first one I shot I came upon standing a short distance away from me as I was following the track of a wounded eland. It was standing gazing inquiringly at the blood-stained track left by the eland. As the bullet passed through it, it sprang up and threw a wonderful somersault, landing stone dead several yards away with a hole as big as one's fist in its side. The second occasion on which I saw one was upon a small plain close to the Lukulu River. I had crossed this river to look for some game on the other side, which was said by the natives to be numerous. I saw plenty of roan and zebra spoor, but neither hoof nor horn, and succeeding in losing my followers in the thick bush, I made for the river bank to wait by the canoe,

knowing that my followers would make for that point also when they gave up hunting in the bush. As I got close to the river bank this cat walked out of some grass and straightway fell a victim to my Winchester.

The natives trap numbers of these animals every year. The common native name for it is Simba Mdogo, which means a small lion. Knowing the habit this cat has of following native paths through the villages in which it can wander at night on the chance of picking up a chicken, they set traps for it in these paths. This trap consists of a sapling planted close to the path; a string passes from the sapling to the ground and is conducted through a short tunnel to a hole in the centre of the path where it is attached to a small ring placed at the head of the tunnel; this ring being of twigs with pointed pieces of wood firmly tied to them and radiating towards the centre. The string of the bent sapling is kept in position by a species of spring. When the cat following this path pushes its foot through the ring armed with spikes, it jerks its foot on finding it held, and releases the catching spring, which causes the sapling to spring up, dragging the animal's foreleg well into the tunnel, where it is held a prisoner till the owner of the trap comes along and hits it on the head.

This cat is a handsome animal, with a yellow

coat of soft fur, which in the old males has a deep orange tint, while the whole coat is covered with black spots and markings like the cheetah. The tail is fairly long and barred with black; the ears are very large for its size and give it the appearance of always being on the alert. This cat is a great raider of hen-roosts, and will frequently break into one, tearing away at the mud walls or door till it effects an entrance. When they succeed in doing this they will destroy every fowl in the roost. The kittens are very pretty little animals, but attempts to tame them as pets are not very successful, as, when they reach a certain age, they tend to relapse into wildness. The usual size of the litter is five. Natives will always eat the flesh of this animal, the skin of which is used by them for clothing.

CIVET CAT

The Civet cat is a dull and uninteresting animal, both in appearance and habits. It lives in the darkest woodland. Its coat consists of very coarse hair, greyish-brown in colour, amongst which are numerous black patches and markings. On the neck and face are lighter patches, almost white, the cheeks being black, and the muzzle pure white. It has a thick mane of hair, blackish-brown in colour, which runs down its back, ending in the tail which is black with a few lighter markings. It

has a sharp pointed face, like a fox, which gives it a mean appearance, and I am sure corresponds with its habits. It hunts for birds, rats, mongoose and any small animal it can catch in the thick bush, being entirely a night feeder.

I have never shot one nor seen one shot, but have seen one killed as it became entangled in the nets the natives were using to catch duiker at a drive. The natives also catch them in the traps I have mentioned as set by them for the serval cat, but I do not think they eat their flesh, nor, owing to the coarse skin and hair of this animal, can they make much use of it themselves, but they will bring these skins in for sale in numbers to any European who may be in the vicinity. When brought home and carefully dressed these skins make good mats and rugs. The well-known odour is often fairly rank upon the raw skins.

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VOCABULARY OF USEFUL WORDS IN THREE NATIVE LANGUAGES

The vocabulary given in the following pages may be found useful by sportsmen or travellers even if they only have English-speaking boys, and have never studied the Bantu languages. If the particular part of the vocabulary for the district the sportsman is shooting in be studied, he will find himself gradually picking out the words he has learnt when a native is talking, and other words as well. The Bantu languages are rich in vowels, and these are pronounced as in Italian, all long and full. The A is not EY, but AA. The E is AY, and I is EE, and the U is OO. This simple rule of pronouncing the vowels holds good for all the languages and dialects of Central Africa.

The Chibemba language is most generally spoken and widely understood over the best shooting parts of the territory. The Chinyanja is spoken from Broken Hill to Fort Jameson, east of the Luangwa, by [the Angoni and other associated tribes such as the Wasenga. Swahili is chiefly the traders' language, and is spoken in the North, throughout German East Africa, the Congo, and on the East

and West coasts. It is understood almost everywhere, especially on the old Arab caravan routes, and is the Lingua Franca of trade.

The names of animals do not differ much, many showing a common origin.

VOCABULARY

ALL RIGHT	Chinyanja . cha bwino	Swahili vema sana	Chibemba che suma
Big Before . Behind . Blood . Bring .	-kulupatsagolapambuyamadzitenga	-kubwa mbele pa nyuma damu leta	-kalamba pantanshi panuma molopa leta
CARTRIDGES CALICO . CARRY . CLEAN . COME HERE	 polo-polo nsaru tenga tsuka fika kuno 	masase nguo chukua fanya safi njoo hapa	fishashi nsaru senda pukata issa kuno
Eggs .	. mandanda	mayai	amani
FAR FIRE FOLLOW FLESH FOWL FLOUR	 kutali moto satira nyama nkuku ufa 	mbali moto fuata nyama nkuku unga	kutali mulilo konka nama nkoko unga
GET OUT GRASS . GUN . GUIDE . GAME . GOAT .	 choka maudzu nfuti fundi n'ama	toka majani bunduki fundi nyama	fuma fiani nfuti mulunshi, chiliongosi n'ama
HEAD . HORNS . HURRY UP HILLS .	mbushimutunyangafurumizamapiri	mbuzi kitwa mapembe piga mbio vilima	mbushi mutu nsengo endeshia mpili

VOCABULARY OF USEFUL WORDS

		Chinyanja	Swahili	Chibemba
Houses .	•	nyumba	nyumba	ng'anda
KILL, To.	•	ku-pa	ku-pa	ku-pya
LEAD . LITTLE .		tsogolera -ng'ono	tangulia -dogo	tangira -nono
	`	ng ono	-uogo	-110110
MONEY .	•	mandarama	fetha	mandarama
FOR FOOD	•	posho	\mathbf{posho}	posho
MAN .	•	mume	maume	mulume
NEAR .	•	pa fupi	karibu	mpepi
Or .	•	mafuta	mafuta	mafuta
PLAIN .		dambo	mbuga	nika
QUICKLY .		msanga	mbio	wangu-wangu
ROAD .		njira	njia	nshira.
SALT .		m'cheri	chumvi	m'cheri
SLOWLY .		bwino-bwino	pole-pole	bwino-bwino
SKIN .		chikopa	ngozi	mpapa
To .	•	ku chozsa	ku tosha	ku funda
STREAM .		mtsinge	mto	mumana
Spoor, Fresh	•	mapazi a sto- pano	miguu ya sasa	makasa ya lelo
Old .		mapazi a kale	miguu ya kale	makasa ya kote
STAND STILL	•	ima	semama	ima
SIT DOWN	•	kala pansi	kaa kitako	kala panshi
SHEEP .	•	nkosa	\mathbf{kondoo}	mpanja
TREES .		miti	miti	miti
THE BUSH		patengo	poli	mpanga
TENT .		\mathbf{hema}	hema	hema
TAIL .	•	mchira	muchia	mpunga
VILLAGE .	•	mudzi	mji	mushi
WATER .		madzi	meji	menshi
WAIT .		linda	ngoja	pembela
Woman .	•	nkazi	mke	nkashi
I WANT .		ndifuma	nataka	ndefya
WOUND, TO		ku lassa	ku umiza	ku lassa

NAMES OF ANIMALS IN NATIVE LANGUAGES

		Chinsenga	Swahili	Chinyanja	Chibemba
ELEPHANT		Nzovu	Tembo	Njobvu	Nsovu
ONE TUSK		Nyalwino	Jinomoja	Nyalwino	Chipembe
No Tusk	•	Ngwala	Tondo	Ngwala	Tondo
Englar		Njobvu ya	Tembo	Njobvu ya	Ninansovu
	•	ikazi	muke	inkazi	
MALE		Kungulu	Tembo wa	Kungulu	Kungulu
TUSKER			meno maun	ne	
Tusks		Meno	Meno	\mathbf{Meno}	Meno
Spoor		Mienda	Miguu	Mienda	Mashinda
ROAN .		Mpelembe	Pelembe	Chilembwe	Npembembe
Lion .		Mkangu	Simba	Mkango	Ukalamu
LEOPARD		Ingo	Chui	Nyalugwe	Mbili
Снеетан		Ü			Chisumpa
HYENA		Chimbwe	Fissi	Fissi	Chimbwe
LECHWE					Nja
Bush-buck		Mbawala	Mbabala	Mbawala	${f Chisongo}$
Bush-Pig		Ngaruwe	Ngaruwe	Ngaruwe	Kapoli
Buffalo		Njati	Nyati	Njati	$\mathbf{M}\mathbf{boo}$
WARTBOG		Kapulika	Njiri	Njiri	Munjiri
SITATUNGA		-	Nsolwe		Nsowe
Puku .			Nsebula	Mswala	Mporokoso
	•				Nseula
GIRAFFE	•	Njomani	Twiga		Ndayawu-
T		C	Damba	Cuana	luwa
DUIKER	•	Guape	\mathbf{Pombo}	Guape	Mpombe
G		N/: l :	Vanaidia	Mnolonolo	(Kalioko
SABLE .	•	Mjambuzi	Kansidia	Mpalapala	Sansara
T/		Chimleama	Mbuzima-	Mbalai	(Nkanshira
KLIPSPRINGER	E	Chinkoma		Moalai	Chibushima-
0		Chalasimhi	jewe	Kanania	bwe
ORIBI .	•	Chelosimbi		Kaponje	Kasene
C		Chuzimi	Mamba	Ma'ono	Naele
CROCODILE	•	Ng'ona	Mamba Nielse	Ng'ona Nielse	Mg'wena
SNAKE .	•	Njoka	Njoka	Njoka	Nsoka
WATERBUCK	•	Chuzu	Chusu	Chuzu	Chusui
Monkey	•	Pusi	Kima	Pusi	Kolwe
OTTER .	•	Ntini	Fissi meji	Ntini	Mukewi
ZEBRA .	•	Chimbwete	Punda	Mbidza	Chingalika,
			Milia		Sinka,
					CHOLWA
T7		AT a b a Car	ATI '	NT - 1 C	Nkolota
ELAND .	•	Nchefu	Nbuuju	Nchefu	Nsefu
Hunting Do	G	Mbulu	Mbamito	Mbulu	Nimbulu
TSESSBE	•			•	Ntenguma.
					lole
			330		

VOCABULARY OF USEFUL WORDS

	Chinsenga	Swahili	Chinyanja	Chibemba
REEDBUCK .	Mphoyo	Nfui	Nfui	Nbasi
JACKAL	Nkandwe	Mumbwe	Nkandwe	Mumbwe
				(Nkonzi
HARTEBEESTE	\mathbf{N} konzi	Konkotela	\mathbf{N} konzi	Nkonko- tera
				(tera
\mathbf{K} \mathbf{v} \mathbf{D} \mathbf{v}	${ m `Ngoma}$	${\bf Kogone}$	'Ngoma	Ntandala
RHINOCEROS .	Chipembe	Kifaru	Chipembere	Chipembere
HIPPOPOTAMUS	Mbu	Kiboko	Mvu	Mfubu

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Any sportsman proceeding to North-East Rhodesia would do well to furnish himself with the excellent handbook published by the British South Africa Company in 1911, entitled *Big Game Shooting in Rhodesia*. This book contains complete information as to customs, regulations, duties, licences, and routes and fares to the country.

Perhaps a few notes of my own may be useful in addition, as the experience of a man who has been travelling the country over three years must bear weight.

In engaging carriers, which is done through Native Commissioners at the various stations, I think that a bargain should be struck that the food allowance of 6d. per week per head should not be compulsory. The meat killed by the sportsman is the best medium which the natives can have for buying flour. It seems unreasonable to me that, in addition to the monthly wage which he has to give his carriers, the sportsman should have to provide them with money or calico to enable them to buy flour when he is feeding them largely with the meat he shoots. The native carriers' allowance of flour is about 30 lb. a week, or in cash, 6d. In many of the districts where game is plentiful, villages may be few and far between, or so small that they are unable to part with any of their flour. Then the yard of calico or the 6d. will not have the same buying capacity, possibly only purchasing half the quantity of cassava, millet or maize flour. fact that the villages are small or far between indicates soil

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unable to support larger communities. The sportsman will do well to assure himself before going to any district that food for his men is plentiful and cheap. This information he can always obtain from the Native Commissioners, whom he will find ready and willing to help him in every way.

Meat is the most valued article that can be given to the Central African native and takes precedence in buying capacity, even of money, for obtaining flour, or vegetables of all descriptions. It is even said that with a sufficiency of meat a man can purchase a wife. I have calculated that the natives reckon 1 lb. of meat as being equal to one penny, so that a lump of buck, elephant, rhino or hippo meat weighing 10 lb. will buy a basket of flour and leave some over for their own eating. Natives are keen bargainers and the man with the meat always has the best of the bargain. If the meat cannot be bartered at once, the owner dries it over fires, making a sort of biltong of it, and carries it along with him strapped to his loads till he either eats it or trades it off. Even when the meat is very high it is still valuable, for in this case the buyer boils it till the smell evaporates, and then eats it. I have often seen natives fighting for the stinking scraps left by a lion, and why they do not get poisoned by eating such meat I cannot explain. To walk behind a caravan of native porters, each man carrying a load upon the top of which is a pile of more or less stinking meat, is exceedingly unpleasant.

In the districts where food is scarce, extra carriers are taken to carry the flour bought in the place of plenty; one flour carrier to every five porters is enough. These flour carriers are paid off as the flour is used up.

In all administrative states of the territory there are

stores, chiefly belonging to the African Lakes Corporation. In addition there are many excellent stores owned by Mr. Ross, of Kasama, and Mr. Creed, of Mpika. The large majority of these stores are only what is called native stores, selling calico, coloured cloth, beads, etc., to the native, and are under the charge of a native Kapitao. In the more important stations the stores are superintended by white men and supply everything a traveller may require. As transport in this country comes to 1s. per pound, the usual price for carriers being 1s. 3d. for every 40 miles, the price of articles bought in these stores is naturally high.

I strongly advise any one going out to shoot to buy all provisions in London through such well-known outfitters as the Army & Navy Stores or Messrs. Lawn & Alder, and to have the cases sent out by the firm a month beforehand, delivery being usually very slow in the country owing to the want of mechanical transport. Much money will then be saved and the buyer is sure of having what he wants and in the best of condition.

A sportsman will often find difficulty in getting fresh vegetables at native villages, except during the rains. The cassava leaf, when boiled and pounded, makes an excellent substitute for spinach. At some villages near marshy ground there is a plant growing called in the native language, "Chiwawa." Boiled with salt and pounded monkey-nuts which have been previously roasted, this makes one of the finest vegetable dishes it is possible to imagine.

When the sportsman has been in the country for some time and has acquired a number of trophies of heads, horns and skins, the question arises of what is best to be done with them. Naturally, after the expense and trouble of

BIG GAME HUNTING IN CENTRAL AFRICA

getting these trophies, the loss of them would be a serious and exceedingly vexing matter. I have found Mr. Ross most careful in his treatment of all trophies entrusted to him for consignment to Europe. He undertakes all the necessary disinfectant treatment and subsequent wrappings and transport at the most reasonable price. As Mr. Ross is himself one of the finest shots and sportsmen in the territory he is exceptionally well fitted to know what is best for the treatment of trophies.

Mr. Creed, of Mpika, another splendid shooting centre, also undertakes the treatment and transport of trophies, and is highly recommended by Mr. Melland, the Native Commissioner there.

The preliminary treatment of trophies by the sportsman is an easy matter. After being cleaned and washed the skins should be pegged out lightly in the sun. The heads of buck are buried in wet mud till the soft tissues rot away, when they are washed in clean water, a process which may last for some days. When this is not possible, they are hung up out of the reach of hyenas till the maggots do the same work. If put into a white ants' nest, the ants will quickly clean the flesh away. To remove the mask from a buck's head for subsequent mounting, an incision is made along the back of the neck and continued round each horn. Another incision is made as far back as possible round the shoulders. The skin is then dissected off the neck, this dissection being carried to the head, finally enabling the mask to be stripped off. It is then turned inside out and cleaned from all flesh and fat. This done, it is turned back with the hair outwards and stuffed with grass to keep its shape, and placed in the sun to dry. If washed with corrosive sublimate, 1 tabloid to the pint, or paraffin, and then dusted subsequently with boracic pow-

der, or better still, naphthol, there is reasonable hope that the borer beetle will not destroy the skin. The best knife to use for this process is a pointed, dagger-shaped one, stiff and strong, and cutting with one edge only.

Some advice as to the best districts to shoot in may be useful. Unfortunately, owing to the sleeping-sickness regulations, shooting is forbidden in the Luangwa Valley, which is swarming with all species of game, including huge herds of the mpala. One could get most excellent sport with these buck before the valley was closed, and many fine heads have been shot there. One of my first shooting days in the country was amongst the mpala, a day which I shall always remember with sadness as I was trying a new rifle whose capacity for shooting too high I did not find out till after I had spent a fruitless morning blazing away cartridges, to the equal disgust of myself and the natives who were with me.

In this valley is also found the blue wildebeeste, which is found nowhere else in the territory. Amongst the thorny bushes of the upper part of the valley the kudu is found, a buck which is not found west of this valley. The sportsman wishing to shoot this buck will have no difficulty in finding it in North-West Rhodesia, where it is plentiful quite close to Broken Hill Station. In the territory on the Plateau various localities exist where special buck is more plentiful than in other parts, and information as to these centres can be obtained at the Administrative Stations. The Chambezi River with its large flats gives excellent shooting for most species of buck, which exist in numerous herds.

For elephant shooting the district of Kasama is one of the best. The shores of Lake Bangweolo are the home of huge herds of lechwe and puku, and close to the Chambezi

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BIG GAME HUNTING IN CENTRAL AFRICA

mouths is found the tsessbe antelope. Elephants have breeding grounds in the thick Msito growths close to this lake and are also found on the other side of the lake in the Fort Rosebery Division, where some very big bulls have been shot. The following shooting route for sportsmen coming in by Broken Hill to the country is given by Mr. Frank H. Melland as a good one for a four months' shoot:—

"Proceed to Mkushi and thence make for Kalongosofu. Sable can be shot at Mlembo River. Thence to Lumbatwa at Chimbangu's Village-rhino, elephant and buffalo can be shot here; then down the Lumbatwa past Lufunwa's and Malamamila's to Chafye-lots of eland, tsessbe, hartebeeste, etc., on the way. At Chafye (Kanina Village) are black lechwe. Then up to the Luitikilla River (Kopa's), and on to Namusulwa's (North). Between these there are always eland, roan, etc. West to Chilonje (good tsessbe place) and north viâ Humana and Kalualesa to the Chambezi River. Good shooting all the way. The East viâ Chipira, site of Musenga's old village—a first-rate shooting camp—and Masonga, Musapa (buffalo and elephant possibly), Malamota, Mumamba to Mutupa (rhino are almost certain along here), and down the Muchinga escarpment to Chimkoko (rhino again and kudu) and on to Msoko and then down the Mwalezi river (elephant, rhino, roan, hartebeeste, Crawshay's water-buck); and on to Mwanangalawa's across the Luangwa. Here mpala, wildebeeste and kudu. Then back by Saidi and Tepoka to the Fort Jameson road (kudu in parts, water-buck, roan and mpala common); and on to Kazembe and Ndombo to the foot of the Muchinga (always a chance of rhino and elephants) and up to Mpika, thence to Broken Hill viâ Serenje."

LIST OF ADMINISTRATIVE STATIONS

The Administrative Stations in the territory are as follows:—

WEST: Fort Rosebery, Luwingu, Kawamba, Chiengi.

North: Katwe, Abercorn, Fife.

CENTRE: Kasama, Chinsali, Mpika.

South: Serenje, Petauke.

East: Fort Jameson, Lundazi.

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